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The Nation.

November 30, 1985 $1.25; U.K. 65p

EDITORIAL

ALL UPHILL FROM HERE

"The news is *so* good," President Reagan gushed at the conclusion of his summit chat with General Secretary Gorbachev, "we're going to hold it till tomorrow." Overnight, the bloated media battalion in Geneva played with Reagan's prediction like a Coon cat with a meadow mouse—grabbing it, running aimlessly with it, then letting it go and seizing it to extend the exquisite torture. But at daybreak it was still a mouse, and a dead one. The good news was the same as the bad news: nothing of substance that could seriously advance peace could be accomplished, no new round of détente would begin, and the current cold war would continue.

As it turned out, Defense Secretary Weinberger's letter to the President on Star Wars and SALT—"leaked" to the press on the eve of the summit by moles still unknown—was less a memorandum of personal advice than a statement of official policy. For all the reasons that should have become obvious during the last five years, the Administration had no intention of compromising its strategy of dominance in superpower affairs, of striking a noninterventionist deal in Third World conflicts or of facilitating the demilitarization of the U.S. and Soviet economies. As much as Gorbachev may have fancied any of those objectives, Reagan would have none of them. His good news was that he resisted world cries for peace and held to the hostile spirit of Weinberger's letter.

As we went to press, the President was jetting home to give his prime-time report on the summit. It seems likely that the Administration will attempt over the next few months to describe the meeting as a famous success. There will be an exchange of visits by the leaders (maybe) and other epiphenomena of cooperation. Reagan says this is a fresh start to the process of peace, but it smells like the same old stalemate.

PEACE CORPS AT 25
Harris Wofford

BATTLE FOR ELLIS ISLAND
Roberta Brandes Gratz
Eric Fettmann

DEFECTION IN THE FAMILY
Kai Bird
Max Holland

HILTON KRAMER'S REVENGE
J. Hoberman

'WORLD'S FAIR'
Edmund White

CRUEL LOVE
Andrew Kopkind

LETTER FROM EUROPE

BAD NEWS FOR FRENCH SOCIALISTS

DANIEL SINGER

Paris

Toulouse, known as the *cité rose* because of the color of its walls, was the palest pink in October as the French Socialists held their congress there, the last before their inevitable and deserved defeat in the parliamentary elections next March. It was an occasion for looking back at the road the party has traveled during its four years in power, or, more accurately, in office. When they were in opposition, the Socialists used to talk, however vaguely, of a "break" with capitalism. Now they discuss how best to manage this indispensable system. For the first time the Socialists unashamedly proclaim themselves social democrats. In 1959, at Bad Godesberg, the West German Social Democrats severed their official connection with Marxism. The Toulouse congress was billed as the Bad Godesberg of French Socialism. It proved much worse, if you will forgive the pun.

The metamorphosis of the Socialist Party is probably best illustrated by the political journey of Michel Rocard: the man who was expected to dominate the congress but didn't; the former Minister of Planning, then Agriculture, in the Mitterrand government; the ex-radical socialist, ex-New Leftist, ex-champion of worker-management and current panegyrist of profit; the perennially unsuccessful political climber. Oddly, Rocard, who used to criticize the state in the name of workers' councils and now does so in the name of private enterprise, has a reputation for political candor and plain speaking. That is stranger still when one recalls that his famous "spontaneous" outburst on television in 1978

(*Continued on Page 588*)

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LETTERS.

SOFT ON THE SOVIETS

New York City

Feckless and perverse are choice words to describe Kai Bird and Max Holland's item on Afghanistan ["Dispatches," Oct. 26]. Unlike Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens, who have refreshingly independent minds, Bird and Holland feel it incumbent upon themselves to expend their energies slavishly remonstrating against U.S. machinations in Afghanistan rather than risk depicting the Soviet Union as in *any* instance the greater of two evils.

The twisted image conveyed by the six paragraphs in question shows a reasonable Soviet Union aghast at a situation that only the zeal and the viciousness of the United States perpetuates. Wait a minute. Wait just a minute. The United States did not invade Afghanistan, nor is it threatening to dispatch 400,000 additional troops, nor is the United States bombing Afghanistan. El Salvador, yes. Afghanistan, no.

How ignobly the United States may exploit this situation hardly seems a paramount ethical concern. Certainly the burden for ending that war (and the blame for its continuation) lies squarely on the Soviet Union. Surely progressive critics here should not maintain that the Soviet Union has some legitimate prerogative to negotiate the fate of another people. Yet for Bird and Holland, the willingness of the Soviet Union to negotiate the fate of the Afghans is a glowing virtue when contrasted with U.S. intransigence. Why, they are even willing to replace one puppet president with another. What magnanimity!

Progressive critics here say to the United States in Nicaragua, "Get out!" Likewise, progressive critics should say to the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, "Get out!" In an instance where the more significant malefactor is so overwhelmingly self-evident, this tortuous inculpation of the United States and the silly admiration of Soviet blandishments can only discredit those who would further debase the level of political discussion in this country. Not since Michael Massing's "hard questions" on Nicaragua has *The Nation* printed such drivel. *Michael Kelley*

BIRD AND HOLLAND REPLY

Washington

A covert war that will cost the United States a half-billion dollars over the next two years makes Washington more than a bystander to the Afghan tragedy. And we are continually astonished at the liberal Democrats who vote against aid to the Nicaraguan *contras* while endorsing an even larger and bloodier "covert" intervention in Afghanistan. The Russians are the aggressors. But the object of the U.N. mediation is the withdrawal of Soviet troops. That goal is more likely to be achieved by diplomacy than guerrilla warfare. The Reagan Administration, it seems, would prefer to see Soviet and Afghan casualties mount, knowing full well that the ultimate outcome can only be military stalemate. The losers, inevitably, are the Afghan people.

We can't speak for our refreshing comrades, Alexander Cockburn and Christopher Hitchens, but we wager they would agree. *Kai Bird and Max Holland*

TOUGH ON FOAT

Oakland, Calif.

I read Catharine R. Stimpson's review of Ginny Foat's *Never Guilty, Never Free* within an hour after finishing the book ["Coming to Grief," Oct. 12]. I can still feel the numbness and grief I felt when reading of Ginny's beatings, self-hatred and guilt. I can still feel the sense of awe that Ginny survived her past and found her way to a productive political life.

Not only does Stimpson fail utterly to convey the intensity, strength and vulnerability of Ginny's book, she inexplicably snipes at and trivializes it beyond recognition. In three pages, Stimpson manages to blame Ginny for:

§ Needing to raise money to pay her legal fees.

§ Finding new strength in learning about feminism.

§ As a growing girl, having ingested Catholicism's Madonna/whore dichotomous view of woman's nature.

§ Failing to write the definitive book on California NOW politics.

§ Not describing the tragedy and horror of her earlier life with more humor.

§ Trying to give voice to the experiences of incarcerated women she met while a prisoner.

§ Believing, when she first began working with NOW, that women in politics would be more honest, caring and principled than men.

§ Not giving sexual details of every affair she (may or may not have) had after separating from her last husband.

§ Agreeing to give requested autographs to the twelve men and women jurors who had just given Ginny back her freedom.

At its best, Stimpson's review is a snobbish, selective tract that fails to convey the essence of Ginny's book. At its worst, it is a strangely cruel, mocking article that seems intentionally to ignore what Ginny tries to convey to her readers.

Stimpson's review leaves me with the impression that she resents positive media interest in any female writer who doesn't have a Ph.D. in English and who, even when describing the most frighteningly intimate details of her troubled life, doesn't use the detached, intellectualized prose Stimpson seems to favor.

The review is a great disappointment and surprisingly unfair. *Barbara S. Bryant*
Former legal coordinator
California NOW

STIMPSON REPLIES

New York City

I did not expect everyone to like my review of *Never Guilty, Never Free*. However, I might have expected a former legal coordinator for NOW to read texts more carefully. Barbara S. Bryant's letter contains a number of factual errors. For example, I did not "blame" Foat for needing money to pay her legal fees. On the contrary, I said that "the state should be responsible for the legal fees of innocent defendants" in show trials. However, rather than pedantically correcting Bryant line by line, I would prefer to point to some larger issues that her rage at my review raises.

How do we respond to the lives of hurt, courageous women? I have known battered women; I have felt "numbness and grief" when they tell me about their lives. However, Foat's life was more than her battering and her survival. It is legitimate to ask about Foat's politics, about her motives for representing some parts of her story but not others, about the tone of her autobiography. Bryant apparently thinks that Foat's book, like her life apart from Jack Sidote, is beyond scrutiny because of the horror of life with him.

How do we reconcile feminism's belief in the goodness of women, a belief I admire, with some women's bad behavior, including that of some feminists? Seeking such a reconciliation, which must respect both the complexities of reality and a politics of hope, is a compelling task of feminist theory and practice. If only through the story of Shelley Mandell, *Never Guilty, Never Free* reveals again the seriousness of that task, a crucial idea in my review.

When will elements of the women's movement stop taunting academics? The anti-intellectualism of American life has been a part of the women's movement since the mid-1960s, in spite of the work of women's studies, in spite of the feminism of many academics. To be sure, professors are no more free from folly and error than doctors, lawyers or anyone else. However, my Ph.D. hardly transmogrifies me, or my review, into the prim, repressive monster of Bryant's last paragraphs. Was it easier to conjure up such a monster than to confront the fact that other reviewers of *Never Guilty, Never Free*, some of them feminists without a doctorate, have had the same doubts about the book that I had? *Catharine R. Stimpson*

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EDITORIALS.

Wrong Defectors

When a Rumanian sailor jumps ship in Florida, the government gives him a hero's welcome as the day's defector from Communist tyranny. When a Ukrainian teen-ager would rather stay with relatives in Illinois than accompany his parents home, the U.S. authorities grant him resident refugee status. When a Soviet seaman dives to freedom in Louisiana and then decides to return to his grain ship, perhaps under threat of reprisals to his family or because his defection would deflate pre-summit diplomatic foreplay, powerful senators demand that he be given sanctuary.

No such welcome attends the arrival of thousands of victims of oppression in Central America who make their way to *el Norte* only to find sanctuary denied. They are not even afforded semantic haven as defectors, refugees or émigrés; the government calls them illegal aliens, and charges those who help them with smuggling and "criminal enterprise." In the savage logic of Administration immigration policy, they have no human rights because they come from the wrong side of the ideological tracks: America's imperial client states to the south.

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In Tucson, Arizona, government prosecutors are pursuing that logic, and the savagery, to extraordinary ends as they seek the conviction of eleven enterprising criminals accused of smuggling aliens into this country and giving them the sanctuary they do not deserve. The eleven include two Roman Catholic priests, a nun and a Protestant minister. Assistant United States Attorney Donald M. Reno is clearly worried that the presence of men and women of the cloth at the defendants' table could provoke an unhealthy sympathy for their cause among the jury. He has moved to deny the defense the right to make any political, religious or historical arguments in court; to give evidence on conditions in Central America, U.S. foreign policy or international law; or to introduce any testimony about moral or spiritual motivations. Reno regularly refers to the sanctuary movement as an "alien-smuggling conspiracy" akin to illegal drug operations, complete with "generals" (the clergy), "safe houses" (churches and other places of sanctuary, numbering about 270, in thirty-three states) and a "Nogales connection" (the twin cities of the same name in Mexico and Arizona where the two priests' parishes are located). He pointedly refuses to call the nun "Sister," although he told the jury he means "no disrespect." Naturally, the presiding Federal district judge granted all the prosecution's motions and denied the defense's pleas, thus frustrating the defendants' plans for a trial informed by political and religious realities.

Perhaps because the Constitution is so strict about free expression and because American tradition honors personal advocacy of unpopular beliefs, government prosecutions of political prisoners over the years have vigorously denied the political nature of their crimes. Political miscreants in the United States are charged with destroying government property in the form of a draft card, withholding someone's private property in the form of a slave or smuggling aliens in the form of desperate Guatemalan peasants. The hypocrisy works for the government; an act is hard to defend if its meaning cannot be raised in explanation.

Politics, however, does have a way of breaking through the judicial hypocrisy. The sanctuary movement is not a drug racket or a real estate scam, and it has the power to organize both conscience and consciousness beyond the government's determination to destroy it. The Administration may think it can stop this "underground railroad" in an Arizona courtroom, but it will find that it is using a lot of heavy machinery on what is essentially a sidetrack.

Science Shot Down

Remember P78-1? It's unlikely that you do. Once, it was just another satellite hurtling through the increasingly cluttered void. Its mission was abstruse and purely scientific. It collected and transmitted to earth data on solar disturbances and their effects on electronic communications, as well as the hazards they pose to space shuttle operations. As a sidelight, the busy little fellow checked out the effects of small comets colliding with the sun.

As of September 13, P78-1 is no more, shot down over the Pacific Ocean by a U.S. Air Force antisatellite missile in a test of the ASAT program. The Air Force pronounced the exercise "flawless," and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger said that he was "absolutely delighted." In all the excitement the Air Force's identification of the downed bird as, in the words of *The New York Times*, "a defunct six-year-old military satellite," went unchallenged.

Now we know that P78-1 was not defunct; nor was its mission military. The Pentagon lied. In the aftermath of the test, some scientists protested. Robert MacQueen, director of the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, delivered P78-1's eulogy: "They took a scientifically useful satellite and sacrificed it this way." As this month's issue of *Research and Development* points out in an editorial, not only was a valuable source of data lost but pieces of P78-1 are now drifting about in space, "all capable of puncturing the suit of an extravehicular astronaut or damaging a spacecraft."

The little satellite's fate is emblematic of the aim of the Strategic Defense Initiative—destruction rather than knowledge. Let P78-1's epitaph read: "Here lies science. Shot down by Star Wars."

Citizen Nader

In April 1959, a young Harvard Law School student published an article in *The Nation* about the failure of the automobile industry to produce safe cars. "It is clear that Detroit today is designing automobiles for style, cost, performance and calculated obsolescence," he wrote, "but not—despite the 5,000,000 reported accidents, nearly 40,000 fatalities, 110,000 permanent disabilities and 1,500,000 injuries yearly—for safety." Six years later his meticulously researched and cogently presented indictment of Detroit became a best-selling book. The publication of *Unsafe at Any Speed* was the landmark event of the new public interest movement. And its author, Ralph Nader, became a household name.

The twentieth anniversary of that publishing event was observed in Washington last week with a reception for Nader, and the celebration served to put some historical perspective on one of the most extraordinary public figures of these times. Nader and the "raiders" he inspired have raised issues across the range of public interest from the performance of Congress members to the performance of cars. But more than any one campaign, Nader's concept of a new democratic politics of citizen participation has revolutionized—for once the hyperbole is accurate—the conduct of civic affairs in America. Nader developed a theory of citizen empowerment, a strategy to organize people to oppose the corporate and bureaucratic decisions that affect their lives but are increasingly beyond the reach of the archaic political institutions designed for a simpler society.

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Demand-side opposition to supply-side power.

Nader's idea has been to show people, case by case and detail by detail, that their health, their safety, their paychecks and their future are being ripped off by the new monopolies of power. These are not the cartoon capitalists of the turn of the century; they are the faceless bureaucracies, which run industry, finance, government, sports, medicine and virtually every aspect of public life for the convenience and profit of the managers rather than the welfare of their customers. Knowledge is the beginning of power, and an understanding of the consequences of corporate behavior was the start of the movement that Nader projected.

Ralph Nader has been a friend, adviser and frequent contributor to this magazine, from that first prophetic article in 1959 through reports on all manner of public injustices. Activists and investigators who have followed his lead and learned from his endeavors, some of whose articles have also appeared in these pages, have enriched the political discourse. We certainly can't take credit for Ralph—it is more often the other way around—but we welcome this anniversary of the publication of *Unsafe at Any Speed* as an opportunity to give credit to a powerful voice in the nation.

Hope in Ulster

In Ulster, Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Garret FitzGerald have come perilously close to committing truth about the wretched province. Their daring offers a glimmer of hope that Northern Ireland's long agony—sixteen years from a contemporary standpoint, 300 from a historical one—may be coming to an end. The long struggle, of course, is between the dominant Protestants and the underclass Catholics, and the Anglo-Irish accord signed on November 15 almost says as much, with its FitzGeraldian emphasis on two rival "communities" and "traditions."

The misleading euphemisms "loyalist" and "unionist" for Protestants, "nationalist" and "republican" for Catholics, wrongly suggest that the quarrel is over some abstract political principle or the location of the Irish border. It is not. The bitter war flows from the largely successful attempt by 1 million Protestants to exclude 600,000 Catholics from high-paying jobs—in the shipyard, aircraft plants, machine tool industry and local government.

The new agreement explicitly recognizes that discrimination exists, something the British government, which owns or subsidizes many of the discriminating plants, has long refused to acknowledge. By conceding that the Catholic republic to the south has a legitimate concern for its co-religionists in the north, the accord gives Dublin its long-sought "Irish dimension." Through an Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, Dublin is assured continuing oversight of a particular class of British subjects, the Catholics of Ulster. This is a remarkable concession, as if the United States signed a treaty with Mexico allowing the latter to make recommendations to Washington about the treatment of Hispanic-Americans in Texas and California.

Finally, the accord enunciates some home truths for the I.R.A., a totalitarian menace to Ireland's democracy; for its political camp followers in the republic; and for sentimental Irish-Americans who confuse the gunmen with a liberation movement. There can be no unity between north and south at the point of a gun, it implies. A united Ireland can be achieved only when enough Ulster Protestants join Catholics to provide a majority in favor of one. If Margaret Thatcher was politically brave in yielding a smidgen of sovereignty, Garret FitzGerald was equally bold in telling his people that the time for empty dreams is past.

The peculiar class war raging in Ulster has been confined to blue-collar Protestants and Catholics. The businessmen, bankers and professionals in both communities concluded long ago that conflict was too costly and declared their readiness to accept any solution. And demagogues like the Rev. Ian Paisley and his lower-middle-class parishioners are unable to destroy the accord, for all their predictable fulminations. The genuine leaders on the Protestant side are the nameless shop stewards and other men of influence on the factory floor. They killed the first serious reform effort—power sharing—eleven years ago with a paralyzing general strike; they can destroy the new agreement if they choose.

What they choose will depend in large measure on Britain's success at reviving Ulster's dying economy. Unemployment runs at a ferocious 22 percent, much higher among Catholics. Protestant workers are far less likely to go into the streets to preserve their monopoly on desirable jobs if employment expands. But Thatcher must swallow her hostility to economic intervention. The accord can also be wrecked in Ireland, where cynical sometime-patrons of the I.R.A. like Charles Haughey, leader of the opposition Fianna Fail, may try to bring down FitzGerald for abandoning the illusion of unification without majority consent.

Whatever happens, the quarrel has at last been realistically framed. There will be less pretense over what the fight is about, who is fighting and how quarrels can be resolved.

The voluble FitzGerald, an economist in touch with the real world, and John Hume, the brave and decent schoolteacher from Londonderry and a Member of Parliament from the Social Democratic and Labor Party, are largely responsible for articulating this uncommon-sense approach. It was first aired at their New Ireland Forum in May 1984. Then Thatcher dismissed it. But the sharp swing by Ulster's frustrated Catholics to Sinn Fein, the I.R.A.'s political front, in the latest local elections, may have convinced her to take a second look. Ulster's killings are surely not over. The I.R.A. and the Protestant gunmen have a vested interest in continued violence. But for the first time since the abortive power-sharing experiment of 1974, the people of England, Ireland and Ulster have something on which to build.

BERNARD D. NOSSITER

Bernard D. Nossiter analyzed the Ulster problem in Britain: A Future That Works *(Houghton Mifflin) and covered the troubles during his seven-year tour as London correspondent for* The Washington Post.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident

MOSCOW, Nov. 14—Mikhail S. Gorbachev's America is a land controlled by wealthy capitalists and conservative business interests.

Right-wing forces dictate Government policy and would never permit a lasting improvement in relations with the Soviet Union.

A profit-hungry military-industrial complex is the real force behind the development of space-based weapons.

That was how Philip Taubman, Moscow correspondent for *The New York Times*, described "the impressions of the United States that Mr. Gorbachev has presented in conversations with American officials and politicians . . . according to Western diplomats." Those Commies will believe anything.

His Place in History

The weeks leading up to the summit now concluded produced some of the most preposterous news coverage in my memory. The basic project of the U.S. media was simple enough: to take a President

§ who is pitifully ignorant of the most elementary facts not only about the arms race but also about the Soviet Union;

§ who in 1982 suspended negotiations for a comprehensive test ban;

§ who has been seeking to annul the ABM Treaty and, down the road, the Partial Test Ban, because the most crucial component of the supposedly nonnuclear Star Wars plan is the high-yield nuclear Excalibur X-ray Laser project, which will need repeated testing;

§ who responded to Gorbachev's August 6 suspension of nuclear testing by inviting the Soviet Union to be present at a U.S. nuclear test

and present him as a man who went to the summit because he wished to be remembered in history as a man of peace. This tireless emphasis on Reagan's concern for his place in history is perhaps the most ludicrous of all the media's obsessions, as if history were a limousine to be summoned when convenience dictates or desire arises. Reagan's history as an implacable purveyor of ignorance and reaction is already far advanced beyond the rough draft. However powerful the Geneva Muzak, however roughly passionate the exchanges with Gorbachev in the pool house of the Fleur d'Eau Château, his testament will still be the graves of the *contra* victims in Nicaragua and the appropriations for the Star Wars funding juggernaut, which Reagan, were he to turn into Gandhi overnight, is now powerless to stop.

And Our Side?

Meanwhile, what of the U.S. peace movement's performance of late? Alex Amerisov had an extremely important article in the October 23 issue of *In These Times*, about the Soviet Union's August 6 moratorium on the testing of all nuclear weapons and the U.S. peace movement's reaction to it:

> Of all the things that the Freeze Campaign has decided to do, the most spineless is their drive to collect one million signatures on a petition for a nuclear test ban. Who is it addressed to? One of the addressees is Ronald Reagan, another is Mikhail Gorbachev. Why Gorbachev? Hasn't he already made the move the petition asks to be made? . . . Doesn't it mean that sending the petition to both, one guilty and another blameless, undermines the moral impact on the one who is intransigent? Freeze leaders do this to maintain "evenhandedness," so as not to look "pro-Russian" or "unpatriotic." . . . Instead of educating people to correct the prevalent misconceptions, they are trying to build a movement that could only be deeply anti-intellectual, one that is afraid of thinking.

Soon the great transcontinental march against nuclear weapons will head from Los Angeles toward New York—another depressing advertisement for the idea that innocence, Live Aid logistics plus outdoor lavatories are adequate substitutes for politics or principle. Those who want something more than these occasional spasms of trepidation about the arms race should think about Amerisov's point—that the peace movement should drop this evenhanded whinnying and start talking about the world as it is.

More Rat Poison

Unusually repulsive promotional material prepared by *The New Republic* has just been conveyed to this column. The material takes the form of "updates" for advertisers and advertising agencies. One glossy pamphlet hails those corporations that have bought space in the magazine in recent issues, among them DeBeers, Lorillard and Philip Morris. (Those last two were presumably grateful for the suppression earlier this year, by *New Republic* editor in chief Martin Peretz, of a story critical of tobacco companies.) Another pamphlet proudly announces that Ronald Reagan has quoted the magazine; a third boasts of its lunchtime guests, among them David Stockman, T. Boone Pickens and Patrick Buchanan. And, of course, all advertisers get the souvenir program of *The New Republic*'s seventieth-anniversary bash, with sensationally revealing pictures of such friends of the magazine as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Henry Kissinger, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Lane Kirkland, Irving Kristol and Tipper Gore.

The Red and the Black

Not so long ago I suggested that if a black South African were suddenly to enjoy the living standard of a person in Cuba, he would think he had died and gone to heaven. This provoked a request from John Lofton, columnist for *The Washington Times*, for supportive data. Here it is.

Average life expectancy for blacks in South Africa is 58.9; for whites 72.3. In fact, the former of these two figures is bogus, since, unlike further statistics below, it excludes the so-called homelands. The last time these were included, in

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1972, black life expectancy was 46.1. In Cuba life expectancy is 75, the same as in the advanced capitalist United States, where this average conceals the black male life expectancy figure of 65.

Black infant mortality in South Africa is 100 per thousand. In Cuba the figure is 20 per thousand. The figures in the United States are 9.7 per thousand for white infants and 19.2 for blacks. The usual daily caloric intake for rural blacks in South Africa has been estimated at 1,268; for Cubans, at 2,997; and for Americans, at 3,616. And keep in mind that Cuba enjoys an egalitarian system, whereas in the United States, some caloric intakers are more equal than others.

In black South Africa there is one doctor for every 12,000 patients; in Cuba, 720; and in the United States, 520. Once again, you will find rather more doctors around Seattle than in rural Arkansas, whereas in Cuba health care is equitably distributed. A few months ago the Overseas Development Council ranked North and South American countries on the basis of life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy, and the United States, Canada and Cuba came out far ahead. Indeed, only the United States' claim of a 99 percent literacy rate enabled it to surpass Cuba. Judging from the number of people I see in my local supermarket who need help figuring out what's in the cans on the shelves, that 99 percent figure is highly optimistic.

In short, Mr. Lofton, the Cuban revolution has produced an astounding improvement in the lives of its people. South African blacks are a persecuted, systematically degraded underclass. They earn an average of 22 cents for every dollar paid white wage earners, or $250 monthly, compared with $1,136 for whites. A black child gets 8 cents spent on its education for every dollar spent on a white child. There are 22.7 million blacks in South Africa, 22,000 of whom are now receiving higher education, against 100,000 out of the country's 4.5 million whites.

Footnote: The statistics cited above were researched by my colleague Jim Naureckas. In the case of the United States and Cuba, they come mostly from the World Bank; in the case of South Africa, from government sources and independent bodies—which details have been forwarded to Lofton and are available to interested readers.

Right On

As part of my policy of demonstrating that journalism in the United States is alive and well at the grass roots, I quote from the November edition of *Lookout!*, a periodical published out of Laytonville, fifty miles north of the great metropolis of Boonville, in Northern California:

> Dan White's corpse was barely cold when the Bay Area's hydra-headed media apparatus launched a campaign to portray him as a basically good boy who made one teeny-weenie little mistake. A religious man, a soldier who volunteered to go to Vietnam, a policeman, an athlete, an aggressive, hard-driving, competitive, macho man . . . and we are supposed to accept all of these attributes as being positive qualities. Well, I'm sorry, but I don't buy it. As a timid, underweight young Catholic boy, I spent too much of my childhood being bullied and intimidated by future Dan Whites and the black-garbed priests who pulled their strings to see much good in these hateful little bigots.
>
> Whether Dan White went to Vietnam and killed gooks or became a cop and beat up blacks and gays, or even if he had instead become a priest and devoted his life to warping young minds rather than fulfilling his ultimate destiny as a political assassin for the business establishment, his whole existence would still stand as mute and awful testimony to the horrors that we as a society visit on our fellow humans. Dan White may be dead, but already in our institutions, in our streets and homes, we're busily breeding those who will take his place.

Those excellent sentiments are expressed by *Lookout!*'s editor and apparently sole writer, a man calling himself Lawrence Livermore. If you want to get *Lookout!*, write for details to Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454. I assume you are already subscribing to the pride of Boonville and perennial thorn in the taut nates of the booboisie of Mendocino County, the *Anderson Valley Advertiser*. You can get this fine weekly for $15 a year from Box 459, Boonville, CA 95415.

From My Mailbag

Dean Baker of the University of Michigan writes:

> Since you have on several occasions given attention in your column to the media's cover-up of the bombing in El Salvador, I thought you would be interested in some protests that took place last month when NBC decided to film a special edition of the *Today* show dealing with campus life in the 1980s, live from Brown University and the University of Michigan. Our CISPES chapter contacted the Brown chapter and we arranged a joint protest of NBC's failure to cover the bombing. NBC responded by roping off an area around the stage where the show was being filmed large enough to keep the protest from being seen or heard. Two individuals who attempted to bring signs into the roped-off area were physically removed. Two other individuals who had tickets to be in the stage audience were physically prevented from holding up a banner protesting NBC's failure to cover the bombing. Whenever a camera would pan the audience and approach one of our signs, the camera person would immediately jerk the camera away. . . . the absurdity of this situation is heightened by the fact that one of the topics of the program was student activism. Throughout the broadcast our friends from the *Today* show were writhing in fear that some real student activism might spoil their little Potemkin village. Not surprisingly, NBC finds it necessary not only to censor news from El Salvador but also to censor protests of their coverage.

Also from my mailbag, McCarthy Coyle writes: "In re Claire Sterling and the Bulgarian Connection: have you learned of the Kielbasa Caper? My sources tell me that had not the supreme Pontiff consumed a huge piece of that Polish horsecock for lunch on that dark day, he would be dead. It seems the bullet became lodged in the kielbasa and thus failed to penetrate any vital organ."

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UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

I've been wondering for a long time where all the chicken à la king went. A few years ago, I began to think that the government might have it stored somewhere—in huge silos, maybe, or in those salt caves in Kansas where they keep surplus rutabaga and old Army morning reports. When I come across a cluster of those silos on the plains, I figure maybe two of them have chicken à la king and the third one has beef stroganoff and the fourth one is filled to the top with Nehru jackets. I've been wondering for a long time where all the Nehru jackets went.

There must be billions of gallons of chicken à la king somewhere. There was a time—in the 1950s, say—when the whole country seemed to be awash in chicken à la king. Thousands of Kiwanians ate it at Kiwanis luncheons. Kiwanians ate so much chicken à la king that whenever I heard them sing their song, "I'd Rather be a Kiwanian Than in Any Other Club," I expected to hear a few lines in there about the health-giving qualities of the dish that was giving strength and succor to all Kiwanians everywhere:

> There's nothing can defeat us,
> Whatever life may bring.
> 'Cause we can go and eat us
> Some chicken à la king.
> So I'd rather be a Kiwanian than in any other club.

In those days, rich people of the sort who were listed in the Social Register ate a lot of chicken à la king, doled out of silver serving bowls at wedding receptions and coming out parties by waiters who looked snottier than the guests. This was not chicken à la king left over from the Kiwanis luncheon; a lot of the towns where rich society people live are so fancy that they don't even have a Kiwanis. This was brand new chicken à la king. I had the opportunity to witness rich people eating it because one of them was my college roommate—Thatcher Baxter Hatcher, known as Tush. I ate chicken à la king at Tush Hatcher's wedding. I ate chicken à la king at the coming out party for Tush Hatcher's sister Baxter Thatcher Hatcher, who was known as Caca, since a suitor who was whispering sweet nothings into the ear of someone called Baxter might suddenly get the feeling he was talking to the chief executive officer. There was so much chicken à la king at Caca Hatcher's party that, as I danced the fox trot to the bouncy debutante music of Lester Lanin and his No Sex on the Dance Floor Orchestra, I half-expected a chanteuse to step to the microphone and sing:

> Our sacred club is safe
> From those of non-WASP blood.
> 'Cause none of them apply:
> They wouldn't eat this crud.

There was a time, in fact, when I thought that it might be chicken à la king consumption that was causing rich society people to talk without opening their mouths. I knew that the sauce that chicken à la king floats around in could get kind of gluelike, particularly when it sat around in silver serving bowls for a while, and I thought it might be bonding the rich people's teeth together. (I mean, of course, a single rich person's upper plate to his lower plate, not one rich person's teeth to another rich person's teeth. Although, now that I come to think of it, Tush Hatcher's mother talked a bit like her teeth were bonded to the teeth of Tush's father, or somebody.) I dropped the theory when I realized that my cousin Lester, who was a mad-dog Kiwanian, consumed as much chicken à la king as any rich person, and he didn't talk without opening his mouth. In fact, Lester erred a bit in the other direction, particularly when he was talking and eating chicken à la king at the same time.

In those days, I would sometimes say to my college roommate, "Tush, you rich people eat chicken à la king like it was going out of style." And that's what happened. It went out of style. They must have been stoking up, knowing that. Those rich people weren't so dumb. They just sounded dumb, because of having their teeth bonded together from eating chicken à la king.

So what happened to it? It must be out in those silos. The way I see this, the government probably tried to fob it off on some poor people in some place like India, and they wouldn't eat it. They didn't want to seem ungrateful, so they told the State Department people that the chicken is sacred in India. The real reason was that the Indians thought chicken à la king tasted like the sort of thing WASPs eat in their clubs; during the Raj, the British ate a dish very much like chicken à la king in their clubs, in order to keep the Indians from applying, although they called it Aunt Nigel's Boots. To this day, though, a lot of State Department people think that the chicken is sacred in India. What India really wanted from the silos were the Nehru jackets, but State wouldn't release them unless the Indians also agreed to accept a thousand carloads of bell-bottom blue jeans.

When the current fashion for American cooking began, some people thought it was a conspiracy by the government to get rid of all that chicken à la king. It wasn't. Here is how this fashion for American cooking started: Bloomingdale's ran out of countries. That's right. It had already held a Fall Festival of France and a Celebration of Japan and a Wonders of India month. There weren't many countries left. You can't have a Chad Celebration or a Guyana Festival. So Bloomingdale's celebrated America, and the rest is, as they say, goat cheese.

Also, the restaurants that have sprung up during the fashion for American cooking don't serve chicken à la king. They serve fried chicken. They serve chicken pot pie. No chicken à la king. Is it still out there in the silos? I'm not sure. Not long ago, on a particularly fancy airline menu, I came across an item called Poulet aux Champignons Supreme. I asked the stewardess what she thought it was. She looked around furtively. She drew closer. Then she said, in almost a whisper, "Chicken à la king."

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ARTICLES.

THE PEACE CORPS AT 25

The New Work Begins at Home

HARRIS WOFFORD

Some people may be surprised to hear that, a quarter-century after its conception, the Peace Corps is alive and relatively well, with nearly 6,000 volunteers serving in sixty-one countries. As it celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary, the Peace Corps can count more than 120,000 former volunteers and staff, and that constituency is beginning to flex its muscles.

Born in a 1960 campaign promise by John F. Kennedy, scorned by most of the foreign policy establishment and often misunderstood by the public, the Peace Corps was a political fluke from the beginning. Its first two purposes, set down in the Peace Corps Act of 1961, were to contribute to economic development and to promote a more favorable view of the United States in other countries—the aims of all U.S. economic aid programs. But its third purpose, "to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of the American people," went beyond those aims.

The goal of promoting a better understanding of the world stood in sharp contrast to the predominant and self-righteous rhetoric of the cold war. How to achieve that third purpose and thus realize the potential of the volunteers' service abroad has always been, and remains today, the central riddle of the Peace Corps.

Part of the answer lies in the overseas experience of the Peace Corps volunteers. Even when volunteers are frustrated by the quality of their assignments or their lack of achievement or the failings of Peace Corps or host country administrators, they get an extraordinary education in the field. Even those who are most severe in their criticisms usually concede that their volunteer service was personally instructive.

"My experience had helped me to gain confidence in my own discontent," wrote Paul Cowan in his 1970 book, *The Making of an Un-American*. Despite "contradictions which beset the Peace Corps," Cowan says his tour as a volunteer in Ecuador led him to redefine his loyalties—"to call myself an un-American (citizen of the world), to be willing to fight against my own government whenever that is necessary."

That is not the lesson most members of Congress have in mind when they appropriate funds for the program. But the unpredictable nature of what a volunteer learns is one of the paradoxes that have made the Peace Corps so interesting and so full of promise. It is also an answer to the claim that volunteers are the agents of American cultural or political imperialism. Contending that the program is an image builder for U.S. power, Marshall Windmiller, in his book *The Peace Corps and Pax America*, nevertheless concludes that because the volunteers themselves are "'builders' by temperament," they could also be "of great potential worth in the reconstruction of American society."

In recent years charges have been made that the Central Intelligence Agency has tried to enlist some Peace Corps volunteers. No evidence to prove those charges has been produced, however, and it is unlikely that our master spies are interested in the kind of work Peace Corps volunteers do, the communities in which they serve or the things they learn. Independent, imbued with the volunteering spirit, Peace Corps volunteers are a new breed of overseas workers, who instinctively refuse to act as propagandists for the United States or as government agents of any kind.

Volunteers are not sent forth these days with the fanfare given them in the early 1960s, and they do not find the same admiration for the United States in the host countries that there was in the early years, before the worldwide reactions to the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., and to the whole tragedy of the Vietnam War. But their overseas experience, whether teaching general science in an African high school or promoting a green revolution in an Asian village or helping Latin Americans form rural cooperatives, remains essentially unchanged. They continue to learn as much as they teach, and independent observers report that the Peace Corps itself has also learned by doing. Volunteers' assignments are said to be better organized and more productive than in the initial phase of crash programs, experimentation and rapid growth.

The corps continues to draw potshots from the far right. In a 1984 report, *The Peace Corps: Out of Step With Reagan*, the Heritage Foundation charged, "In numerous ways the Peace Corps has been an annoying thorn in Reagan's side." The foundation alleged that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, "the Peace Corps became a haven for those opposed to American foreign policy," and that it had continued this tradition by giving higher priority to sending volunteers to "Marxist" Zimbabwe than to "liberated" Grenada.

Despite such criticism, Congress has resisted the Reagan Administration's efforts to reduce Peace Corps appropriations and has enabled the agency to increase the number of countries in which volunteers serve. With budgets being cut in almost all domestic programs, the Peace Corps won an unusual vote of confidence this year: Congress approved its expansion to 10,000 volunteers. This will nearly double the corps' size, though still fall short of the 15,000 in service during the mid-1960s.

Moreover, to the astonishment of Peace Corps supporters and the consternation of its foes, Reagan's appointee as director, Loret Miller Ruppe, has turned out to be one of

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the most effective and devoted heads the agency has ever had. Co-chair of the Reagan-Bush campaign in Michigan, and daughter of the founder of the Miller Brewing Company, Ruppe had never worked overseas or indeed had any experience pertinent to the Peace Corps directorship. It seemed like a potentially disastrous political appointment. But she has brought to the task an unexpected administrative ability, tenacity in political infighting and a good sense of humor. It turned out that she and her sister had vowed to serve overseas after hearing Robert Kennedy speak about Africa at her college commencement. Her sister became a Catholic nun and worked as a nurse in Tanzania. Ruppe saw the Peace Corps as a way to fulfill her own youthful pledge.

On November 2, to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Kennedy's promise to create a Peace Corps, the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, D.C., met with Ruppe and the first director, Sargent Shriver. The focus of the celebration was the publication, that day, of the most comprehensive book ever written about the Peace Corps, Gerard T. Rice's *The Bold Experiment: JFK's Peace Corps*. Rice, a young Scot fascinated by American politics, brings to life the extraordinary process of persuasion by which Shriver convinced Congress to establish the program and then to give it more and more money.

Congressional support solidified not just because of Shriver's salesmanship. Under his creative leadership the corps became the most antibureaucratic bureaucracy in U.S. history. With a band of young mavericks, such as his deputy, Bill Moyers, Shriver overwhelmed those in the White House, the Bureau of Budget and the State Department who wanted it to be subordinated to the Agency for International Development. It finally took Vice President Lyndon Johnson to persuade Kennedy that the new wine belonged in a new bottle.

Another reason for the program's long-term success is the growing number of returned volunteers and former Peace Corps staff members who have acquired political influence. Among the former volunteers serving in Congress are Christopher Dodd and Jay Rockefeller; the first volunteer to be elected to the Senate was Paul Tsongas. But what really gives the program its staying power are the 120,000 Peace Corps veterans who have a multiplier effect in thousands of American communities and institutions. These men and women do not speak with one voice, but they have increasingly been making themselves heard.

The Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of Washington, with 600 dues-paying members out of the estimated 3,000 former volunteers and staff members estimated to be working in the area, has played an active role in reversing the decline in Congressional appropriations that occurred in the early 1970s. The Washington group's proposals for expanding and strengthening the agency were passed by the ninety-ninth Congress and signed by President Reagan. A special committee of Washington-based returned volunteers with experience in Central America published a report on U.S. policy in the region that was sharply critical of Reagan's military approach.

The National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, with twenty-five affiliated groups throughout the country, has started a program in a number of high schools to teach students about the problems of Third World development. The Carnegie Corporation and A.I.D. have given the National Council about $80,000 to support this effort to fulfill the corps' third goal.

To work together on this or any other project, volunteers need to be able to find one another. That has not been easy. During the Nixon era, records on past volunteers were destroyed, deliberately mislaid or lost, and existing lists were not kept up-to-date. The lack of current addresses diminished the ability of former members to organize. In 1981, the Peace Corps Institute, an independent foundation set up by President Carter's Peace Corps director, Richard Celeste, now Governor of Ohio, produced a directory of approximately 35,000 former volunteers and staff members. Now, with an initial grant from the World Bank, the institute (headed by William Josephson, who was general counsel of the corps under Shriver) is seeking to include in its computer data bank the remaining 80,000 names.

With the Ford Foundation's help, the institute also recently conducted a study on the prospects for a publication targeted to former volunteers and others who have worked in developing countries. Encouraged by that market survey, several ex-volunteers who are professional journalists are planning to launch a magazine, tentatively titled *Third World*. Another venture being planned is the establishment of a foundation to undertake or help sustain development projects in countries where the Peace Corps has served. Initiated by former Nigeria volunteer Roger Landrum, president of the Washington volunteers' organization, the plan calls for veterans who worked in a particular country to select the projects and then contribute personally to their support.

Those are among the programs being pursued by the Coalition for the Peace Corps' Twenty-Fifth Anniversary. Many former volunteers and staff members concluded that the agency's official plans for its twenty-fifth anniversary were too tame. As the focal point, the coalition is organizing a conference for thousands of Peace Corps veterans, to be held next September in Washington. It will be the third such conference. At the Conference on the Returned Peace Corps Volunteer in 1965, many of the 1,000 participants spoke out against the Vietnam War. At the twentieth-anniversary conference in 1981, some 2,000 people expressed discontent with the course being taken by the U.S. government in regions where they had served. For the free voice of these Peace Corps veterans to be heard, it is best that the next conference be organized without official Peace Corps sponsorship and control.

To realize their potential to educate the American people and influence U.S. foreign policy, Peace Corps alumni, however dispersed, need to speak and act in concert. Formation of a national Peace Corps association made up of all 120,000 former volunteers and staff members, with state and local branches, should be one of the main goals of the 1986 conference.

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If they move effectively, the Peace Corps veterans can be more than a thorn in Reagan's side. Their Peace Corps in dispersion could become a spur to the national conscience. □

PRESERVATION VS. EXPLOITATION

The Battle for Ellis Island

ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ AND ERIC FETTMANN

In "The Selling of Miss Liberty" [November 9], we examined the corporate exploitation of the Statue of Liberty and its debasement into a marketing logo, as well as the absence of public accountability in the fund-raising/restoration campaign led by Lee Iacocca. In this follow-up, we show how that corporate takeover threatens the physical character and historical message of both the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

While the titans of industry divided the market shares of the Statue of Liberty, an unreported behind-the-scenes battle was raging among preservationists, historians, architects and planners over the substance of the restoration effort, particularly on Ellis Island.

Should the gateway to the United States for millions of immigrants be restored to the condition in which they experienced it, or should more than half of its historic structures be torn down to make way for modern exhibition and theater buildings, as proposed by Lee Iacocca's key architectural adviser, John Burgee? Should Ellis, scheduled to reopen in 1992, portray the history of the great immigration wave, warts and all, or will it become, in the cautionary words of Yale University historian Robin Winks, "an ethnic Disneyland?"

It is difficult to tell from the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation's fund-raising appeal—especially its advertisements that depict only the statue—that the bulk of the money will be spent on Ellis Island. Work on Liberty Island, including the statue, the pedestal and new landscaping, is currently budgeted at $62 million. Restoration of Ellis's Registry Building, which includes the famed Great Hall, will cost at least $128 million.

The foundation seems to relegate Ellis Island to the fine print of its ads. This decision was calculated; almost everyone connected with the project to whom we spoke is convinced that only the statue can draw the many millions of dollars needed for the restoration. Yet about half of all Americans today can trace their roots to the nearly 17 million people who entered this country through Ellis Island between 1892 and 1954. Even Iacocca says it was concern for Ellis that first attracted him to the project.

The restoration of Ellis Island is infinitely more complex than the work on the Statue. Miss Liberty is a technical nightmare; Ellis Island, an interpretative challenge.

"All associations with the Statue of Liberty are positive," notes Michael Adlerstein, the National Park Service's historic preservation architect in charge of Ellis Island. "Ellis is more complicated." Only passengers in steerage faced rigorous medical and political examinations; wealthy passengers were simply admitted. For many, Ellis Island was the place at which they were barred from the New World, not welcomed into it. Chances are that the Ellis Island exhibits will include some of that symbolism. But is there a danger that its troubled history will be prettified? And will some disturbing political implications, like the eventually successful campaign for immigration restriction, be ignored?

The treatment of the structures on Ellis, built over several decades and in different styles, is the litmus test. If the island is sanitized through the selective demolition of some of its less esthetically appealing buildings, will the telling of its history also be sanitized?

The government-appointed centennial commission, headed by Iacocca, and its subcommittees of preservationists, historians and architects, were instructed by Interior Secretary James Watt to evaluate restoration proposals for Liberty and Ellis islands. The statue's restoration had its complications, but the issue of greatest controversy was how Liberty Island should be landscaped. On Ellis Island, however, there was a clash of philosophies: a modest facelift, preserving the distinct layers of history, versus a more ambitious and expensive approach, including demolition and new construction. According to at least one committee member, neither side seemed to understand the other's position.

Since the commission was a celebrity affair legally required to meet only quarterly (although it has convened but three times in forty-one months), it was clear from the outset that the real work would be done by its committees of experts. Two committees had primary responsibility for supervising the effort. The preservation and restoration committee, chaired by Russell Dickenson, then director of the National Park Service, and Philip Lax, a pioneer in the planning of the Ellis Island restoration, was instructed by the Interior Department to offer "advice upon requirements and all other considerations, proposals and studies concerned with the preservation and restoration of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island." The architectural and engineering committee was to provide "advice on all matters and proposals concerned with design, architecture, engineering and construction" on the two islands. Its co-chairs were Kent Barwick, then head of the New York City Landmarks Preserva-

Roberta Brandes Gratz, an expert on preservation issues, is completing a book on urban redevelopment. Eric Fettmann is assistant city editor for the New York Post. *A research grant for this article was provided by Essential Information. They wish to thank Robert Morrissey and Margo Schneidman for their assistance.*

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tion Commission, and John Burgee, a corporate architect and partner of Philip Johnson.

Most of the committee members had impressive credentials, but it was Burgee, known nationally for his corporate skyscrapers, who had the best connections to Iacocca, having been one of the foundation's incorporating directors (he resigned a few months after its incorporation). Although, as he admitted to us, he has "never restored anything," Burgee was the design voice to whom Iacocca listened most.

"As soon as it was obvious that Burgee was Iacocca's handpicked representative, we knew our input was meaningless," said one participating architect. "Burgee is not known for taking anyone's advice seriously."

"It was clear from the start that we weren't going to be used properly," said another preservation committee member, who, like others in the field we interviewed, did not want to be quoted by name. "No one in the architecture and urban design community wants to take on John Burgee publicly, any more than anyone in the corporate world wants to take on Lee Iacocca."

What Iacocca has in mind for Ellis, he has said several times is "an ethnic Williamsburg." One committee member complained: "A lot of committee time was spent trying to figure out what Iacocca meant. Even Iacocca probably doesn't know what he meant." According to Burgee, Iacocca "had a vision that there should be some kind of place where people in this country could go to understand what immigration was all about and see some of the ethnic culture that was brought to this country." Some committee members, however, say that Iacocca cares little about the substance of the restoration, as long as it's big, successful and finished on time. "Lee Iacocca has acted like a man trying to make his political mark and has pushed the Park Service to do his bidding," said one preservationist. "His is not the behavior of a man who loves the task. He has isolated himself, picked his own team, shown no sense of hands-on caring, as he had at Chrysler." Others say he cares deeply about Ellis Island but doesn't know how to translate his concerns into design.

THE SELLING OF MISS LIBERTY

The November 9 Nation reveals how major corporations, under the direction of Lee Iacocca, have taken over the statue restoration for their own publicity and profit and excluded the American public. $3 each. Special discount on bulk sales (through 12/9) 10-49 copies $1.50 each, 50-99 $1.25 each, 100 or more $1 each. Prepayment required. Send order to Miss Liberty, The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

Just as Iacocca was in full control of the fund-raising campaign, so Burgee sought to shape Liberty and Ellis Islands. Before Iacocca and Burgee came on the scene, the Interior Department and the National Park Service had taken steps toward restoring the hospital wards that take up the portion of Ellis Island known as the "outer half," opposite the Great Hall. The site was declared "excess" government property in 1954, but not until years later did the Park Service seek to turn it over to a private developer, under the Historic Properties Leasing Act. Proposals were solicited in the fall of 1981, and by the time Iacocca's commission was appointed, in May 1982, the Park Service was leaning toward a plan submitted by the Center for Housing Partnership (C.H.P.), a nonprofit rehabilitation firm in New York City headed by William Hubbard. The $50 million proposal called for building a conference center and lavish hotel, complete with tennis courts and pool; that was later scaled down, after objections were raised, to a conference center modeled on the Aspen Institute. The hospital units were to be "meticulously" restored to create "a living re-use of Ellis Island."

At the commission's first meeting, in September 1982, Iacocca prevailed on its members to ask James Watt for a ninety-day delay on deciding on proposals for Ellis Island. The commission promised to make a formal recommendation to Watt by January 1, 1983. At that point, Burgee told us, Iacocca asked him to "see what the other possibilities might be." In early 1983 Burgee submitted a new plan, in conjunction with Herb Rosenthal & Associates, an exhibition and economic consulting firm. It envisioned restoring the Great Hall to its 1907 condition, building a Museum of Immigration and creating an exhibit on "the special skills, ideas and customs of individual ethnic groups."

Burgee's most controversial recommendation involved the demolition of approximately two-thirds of the existing structures and the erection of buildings to replace them. "I didn't feel the necessity to save every single last element or thing on Ellis Island," Burgee told us. "A lot of it was falling down and couldn't be used by anybody. I didn't carry my historical feelings as deeply as some other people did." He insisted that the buildings he would demolish "are small and just not appropriate for exhibition uses," adding that "since so few of the immigrants actually experienced those places, they aren't historically and architecturally important."

Park Service restoration guidelines, however, insist that "every reasonable effort will be made to use a historic structure for one or more of its historically intended purposes," that "historic material or distinctive architectural features are not to be altered or removed" and that "alterations that have no historic basis are prohibited." For Ellis, in particular, the Park Service gave instructions to "preserve any buildings superfluous to the need for exhibit buildings [and] restrict new construction."

In its formal report the preservation committee faulted the Burgee plan in every respect, noting that it would require an additional $60 million to $100 million and that 2 million tourists a year (more than visit the Statue of Liberty) would be needed to make it economically viable. Dickenson opposed

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the Burgee plan in even stronger terms, calling it "the antithesis of what we are trying to do."

Eventually a compromise plan was worked out that won the preservationists' support. It would keep the C.H.P.'s conference center but move it to an "inconspicuous" part of the island. Dickenson's committee said the compromise "combined the best elements" of the previous plans and "few if any of the disadvantages," and recommended that it be presented at the centennial commission's next meeting, scheduled for February.

But that meeting was never held. "I talked to enough people to know the compromise would pass," recalls Garnet Chapin, the Park Service's liaison with the commission on the project. But when he arrived for the meeting at Chrysler headquarters in New York on February 4, Chapin was told it had been called off. Instead, he says, "Iacocca, Burgee, [J. Paul] Bergmoser, [Richard] Rovsek and [Armen] Avedisian held a rump session. Iacocca told us later that the commission had met and disapproved the compromise."

If in fact that group convened, it was not a legal commission meeting. Avedisian and Iacocca were the only commission members present. The others were connected with the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation. Also, the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which governs the commission's operations, requires that a duly designated government representative attend all meetings.

Burgee continued to push his own plan. Eleven days after the so-called rump session, he wrote Iacocca that the architectural and engineering committee thought the conference center proposal was "inappropriate" and suggested that the foundation hire an architect to draft a master plan. Iacocca was receptive, and Burgee notified his committee that the Chrysler chief had reiterated that "the hotel was undesirable and should not be approved." But on April 4, James Watt designated C.H.P.'s William Hubbard as the developer of the outer half of Ellis Island.

Four days later Dickenson presented what Chapin described as "a very thoughtful study of alternatives" to Iacocca and several commission members. At a hearing of Representative Bruce Vento's Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation this year, Chapin testified that in the middle of the presentation, "Iacocca got up and said, 'I don't want to hear any more of this goddamn Park Service shit.'" Another source said Iacocca railed against the conference center, vowing to resign from the commission if it was adopted.

Not long after that meeting, the foundation hired its own architect. The choice? John Burgee—who is not paid, foundation officials told us, although his firm gets expenses "without the usual industry markup." A formal contract is being negotiated only now. On May 25 of last year, after a special subcommittee failed to break the stalemate that had existed for more than a year, Burgee submitted a new plan. This time he said that a conference center was "not inappropriate" as long as it was "under the control of the foundation"; in addition, he suggested building an exhibition hall and a theater large enough to accommodate a five-story screen for a state-of-the-art photographic process. Most committee members charged that these proposals were out of scale with the historic setting.

Meanwhile, Burgee's committee and Dickenson's committee had merged. In August, Dickenson called on this committee to adopt a master plan. But Carole Rifkind, a noted preservationist on the committee, urged Dickenson to postpone the meeting. "Our meetings have been only sporadic, with inadequate prior notice and without benefit of minutes, studies or essential planning documents," she said in an urgent Mailgram. "I am utterly dismayed at the manner in which the business of this so-called committee has thus far been conducted." Many members shared her view.

The meeting was rescheduled for September, but no plan was adopted. According to Chapin, "Burgee had been asked to draw up a recommendation of what action the committee should take. Instead, he came back with a plan without a conference center. He said the foundation asked him why the conference center was running the entire plan for the island."

In a final effort to break the deadlock, the Park Service bypassed Burgee and the foundation and hired an exhibition design consortium composed of Metaform Inc., Rathe Productions Inc. and Design & Production Inc. Some participants hoped that this new group of highly regarded professionals would focus on the real problems and reconcile the differing points of view. That, however, was not its assignment. In four weeks, it produced a conceptual plan for the exhibits in the main building of Ellis and endorsed the idea of a conference center. The working concept was approved by the committee last December; it is still being refined.

Burgee also clashed with the experts on the Liberty Island restoration. In the same February 1983 letter to Iacocca in

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which he proposed his demolition plan for Ellis Island, Burgee suggested a major expansion of the entire Liberty Island plan, asking that it "be studied to determine if improvements are necessary in pedestrian circulation, concessions, landscaping, lighting, etc." He also urged Iacocca to hire a separate architect "to oversee and coordinate the work" on Liberty Island. However, the French-American committee that was directing the statue's restoration had already hired one, Richard Seth Hayden of Swanke Hayden Connell, and work on Miss Liberty was scheduled to begin in September of that year. On Burgee's recommendation the foundation hired two key contractors. Lehrer-McGovern, a highly regarded firm with which Burgee had worked before, was named construction manager, and G.S.G.S.B., a Pennsylvania firm, was selected as managing architect and planner.

The head of G.S.G.S.B. is E. Lawrence Bellante. In 1973 he headed another architectural firm, which pleaded guilty to Federal tax fraud charges stemming from illegal political contributions to then-Governor William Cahill of New Jersey. The company was fined $2,500 and Bellante agreed to become a government witness. Bellante admitted to us that he never informed the foundation about the indictment and his guilty plea. "I didn't see any reason to," he said. Bellante said that J. Paul Bergmoser, the foundation's executive director and former president of Chrysler, brought him into the project because Bellante's partner, Jack Gilboy, had done some work for Chrysler. Others claim that he was brought in by Bergmoser to force out Hayden and place the work under foundation control.

As work on the statue proceeded, so did planning for the rest of Liberty Island. When the Park Service asked for plans to rebuild the dock shelter, Burgee presented a $15 million proposal for a four-story building with a twelve-story tower on each end. Park Service officials attacked the plan, saying the structure would detract from the statue. Burgee also envisioned a dramatic landscaping of the island, including a mall ringed by the flags of the fifty states. But he failed to consider the island's high winds, which, Park Service experts said, would necessitate the flags being replaced every forty days. "Someone said, 'Let's do the sky's the limit. Do what you think this ought to be,' so I did it," Burgee told us, explaining his plan's rationale.

Burgee considered his plan for the shelter to be perfect: "It was rather large, but I thought its scale was in keeping with the monument. Instead of having this funny little park-scale building when you circle around and approach the statue, I felt you should come to the point of arrival and say, 'Wow! This is important.'" Apparently Miss Liberty herself did not convey that impression.

In October 1984, a meeting of the merged committee was held to adopt a master plan for Liberty Island. Burgee said he had been "asked by Lee Iacocca to present his proposals . . . as an alternative to the Park Service 'patch and fix approach.'" As he had done with the Ellis Island restoration plan, Burgee forced a stalemate. "The Park Service was not happy with Burgee's design philosophy and vice versa," Bellante told us. "John fought for his principles, like a good architect should, and the Park Service fought for theirs." One Burgee defender notes, however, that "the Park Service people are so wedded to the idea of leaving things as they always have been that it is difficult to conceive of them making even positive changes to existing buildings."

But should there have been a fight? "Of course there has been resistance on our part to the Park Service," foundation counsel Palmer Wald told us. "If we think something is financially unrealistic or we disagree, we'll say so." Some participants fault Garnet Chapin, now a vocal critic of the foundation, for not working harder to effect a compromise.

Today, a master plan for Ellis Island is still nowhere in sight and the content of the permanent historical displays on both islands has yet to be revealed. The government-appointed centennial commission met for the first time in nearly two and a half years on November 22—a meeting called just days after publication of our first article.

How historical appropriateness on Ellis Island will be balanced with commercial hucksterism is anybody's guess. Iacocca and company, some observers argued, have not yet focused on Ellis because they have been preoccupied with raising funds and completing the restoration of the statue in time for its opening next July. It is disquieting, though, that there has been no challenge to the process by which Lee Iacocca and a small group of his trusted associates will decide the fate of Ellis Island behind closed doors. □

TAMIL DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY

Sri Lanka Lurches Toward Civil War

RICHARD GREENBERG

The island of Sri Lanka is shaped like a tear, and in the past two years its people have had much reason to grieve. Ethnic violence between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority has left more than 2,500 dead and made hundreds of thousands refugees. For months now, the country has been teetering on the brink of civil war.

A cessation of hostilities implemented in June by Tamil guerrillas seeking a separate state and the Sri Lankan government was breached by both sides. In August negotiations initiated by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Ghandi and held in the remote mountain kingdom of Bhutan broke down. Tamil leaders walked out of the talks, prompted by reports of mass killings of Tamils and by the government's failure to make substantive proposals to meet rebel demands. No date has been set for the resumption of the talks, and with reports of the collapse of a second cease-fire, which took effect in October, the prospects for a settlement are dim.

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The case of Sri Lanka demonstrates the enduring effects of colonialism. The forcible union of two ethnic communities with a history of rivalry was supposed to forge a national identity and create a productive, stable society. Instead, as in so many former colonies in Africa and Asia, it has wreaked havoc.

"You have to understand," a Sri Lankan official told me, "under the British, Tamils were privileged." That view is widely held among Sinhalese, and it is borne out in statistics. In 1946, although Tamils constituted only 10 percent of the population, they held 27 percent of civil service jobs and accounted for 29 percent of university enrollments. The proportion of Tamils in technical occupations was even greater. To leaders of the Sinhalese nationalist and religious revival that took place after independence in 1948, the undue influence of the largely Hindu Tamils posed a threat to the culture of the Buddhist Sinhalese. The majority's fear of the minority was and continues to be exacerbated by Sri Lanka's proximity to India. "Sri Lanka is the only place in the world where Sinhalese culture exists," the official said. "We are merely 10 million, but a few miles away there are 50 million Tamils in southern India."

Since independence, Sinhalese chauvinism has inspired legislation aimed at curbing the Tamils' power. One of the first such acts disenfranchised nearly a million Tamils of Indian origin, whose forebears the British had brought from southern India to work on the tea plantations in the island's central highlands. The indigenous, or Ceylon, Tamils, who were concentrated in the northern and eastern regions and had little contact with plantation Tamils, understood the resulting loss of seven legislative seats as an attack on their political power. In 1956, Sinhalese was adopted as the country's official language. The constitutions of 1972 and 1978 reaffirmed the primacy of the Sinhalese language and granted "the foremost place" to Buddhism.

And so it was the minority's turn to be threatened. In the 1950s and 1960s the Tamils of the north and east responded with calls for a federal system. Protests, which occasionally erupted in violence, prodded the government into making agreements in 1957 and 1965 promising official recognition of the Tamil language and greater Tamil autonomy. These concessions were never implemented, however, because of opposition by Sinhalese politicians and Buddhist clergy. Changes in the education system, especially the "standardization of marks" in the early 1970s, further alienated the Tamils, requiring them to score higher than Sinhalese on examinations for entrance to universities.

In 1976, having realized that their federalist aims were unattainable, the Tamil political parties merged in the Tamil United Liberation Front (T.U.L.F.), which called for the creation of a Tamil state known as Tamil Eelam. Although the United National Party (U.N.P.) government of President J.R. Jayewardene again offered limited concessions on the issues of language and devolution of power, separatist sentiment grew. A number of disillusioned young people organized militant separatist groups and turned to armed struggle. Members of one of those groups, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, went to the Middle East for training in guerrilla warfare from George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The Sinhalese responded in kind. The years 1977, 1981 and 1983 were marked by attacks on Tamils, their houses and businesses. In 1983 the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution outlawed the advocacy of separatism, forcing the T.U.L.F. out of Parliament. Most provocative have been the mass arrests and torture of Tamil youths under the 1979 Prevention of Terrorism Act (well documented by Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists).

In addition to detaining and torturing youths, the police and army have frequently responded to guerrilla attacks by going on rampages against Tamil civilians. On a recent visit to Jaffna, the Tamil "capital," located at the island's northern tip, I heard widespread condemnation of the security forces, often described as "an army of occupation." As in many Tamil towns, the skeletons of burned-out houses, shops and even the public library serve as grim reminders of the violence that has taken place.

"The Sri Lankan security forces have been our best recruiter," said V. Balakumar, a leader of the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students, in his headquarters in the south Indian port of Madras. A few years ago the militant groups could claim several hundred members. Today the five major ones, four of which have formed a coalition, have an estimated 10,000 trained guerrillas, known as "the boys." Atrocities have also intensified support for the guerrillas among the Tamils, many of whom have lost faith in the moderate policies of the T.U.L.F. A prominent Jaffnan active in the field of human rights told me, "Tamils have been stepped on for forty years, but the boys have restored our pride."

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Many Tamils do not approve of the robberies and other acts of violence attributed to the guerrillas (carried out mostly by "opportunistic criminal elements," according to militant leaders), but in a crisis most of them would side with the boys. B. Deogupillai, the Bishop of Jaffna and an outspoken critic of guerrilla violence, characterizes the situation this way: "Many people are afraid of the boys, but they are even more afraid of the army."

Washington has followed a low-key policy on the Sri Lankan conflict. It refuses to extend military aid (U.S. officials regard the army as one of the most undisciplined in the world) but continues to provide economic assistance at an average of $75 million per year, and no cutoff is contemplated. "We prefer to rely on moral suasion," one of them told me. Washington has approved of India's efforts to mediate the conflict, mainly out of a desire to court Rajiv Gandhi. The Administration considers Sri Lanka important because of its strategic location. The main U.S. presence consists of Voice of America transmitters on the island; new ones, capable of beaming propaganda throughout Southeast Asia and as far away as Iran, are planned.

Strategic concerns have impelled Washington to facilitate indirect military support by opening an Israeli interest section in the U.S. Embassy, which has provided Sri Lanka with Israeli intelligence experts to conduct antiterrorist training. In a country in which Moslems make up almost 8 percent of the population, a country that suspended relations with Israel in 1970 and depends heavily on remittances from nationals working in Arab countries, the Israeli presence has been controversial. But the hawkish National Security Minister, L. Athulathmudali, defends the policy, saying that Sri Lankan troops "have never had such good training."

British mercenaries, former members of the Special Air Services (S.A.S.), have also provided training. Officials of the British government, which has turned down repeated requests for military aid, admit they are mildly embarrassed by the role of the ex-S.A.S. men, some of whose trainees have tortured Tamil suspects, but the officials claim that Britain can do nothing to prevent them from operating. S.A.S. officers on active duty have been spotted in Colombo and are believed to be playing a covert advisory role.

The Sri Lankans buy gunboats, armored cars and basic weapons from British companies, as well as from Israel, Pakistan and China, while Tamil militants purchase sophisticated weaponry with funds taken in bank robberies and contributed by Tamils overseas. They have also seized arms in raids on military and police installations. Aside from the limited training obtained in the Middle East, most guerrilla training has been conducted in Sri Lanka and in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where militant leaders have operated openly for two years. The Sri Lankans have accused India of allowing Tamils to train on its soil and to use Tamil Nadu as a base from which to launch attacks on their territory. The Indians have denied the charges, but an official told me that Indira Gandhi "may have turned a blind eye" to such activities. Another source contended that under Indira, India gave material support to Tamil groups and even helped establish the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, which the source described as "India's baby."

In contrast to his mother, Rajiv has been willing to take political risks at home in hopes of gaining a settlement in Sri Lanka. Earlier this year he declared his opposition to Tamil Eelam, which has strong support among Indians in Tamil Nadu, and cleared the way for the confiscation of Tamil arms shipments in southern India. In the spring he and Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari combined pressure with assurances of concrete results in persuading the Sri Lankan government and Tamil groups to negotiate.

The main stumbling block to a negotiated settlement is the question of autonomy. The Jayewardene government refuses to relinquish control over the Northern and Eastern provinces. "The facts are simply against it," says National Security Minister Athulathmudali, pointing to the presence of 250,000 Sinhalese and an extensive Moslem population in the Eastern Province. A.S. Balasingham, a spokesman for the Liberation Tigers, gave the militants' reply only days before his deportation to England in August: "The colonization of the Tamil homeland by Sinhalese settlers is part of a deliberate policy aimed at the genocide of the Tamil people." In the Eastern Province, he pointed out, the Sinhalese share of the population has grown from 8.4 percent in 1946 to 24.9 percent in 1981. "We will never accept anything less than the union of the two provinces which make up the Tamil homeland," Balasingham stressed.

Rajiv Gandhi continues to pressure both sides to reach an agreement similar to the one he signed recently with Sikh moderates in Punjab, who accepted a lesser degree of autonomy than the extremists had demanded. His intention to silence Tamil militants was evident in his ordering the arrest of 3,500 activists in Tamil Nadu who were demonstrating against the deportation of Balasingham and two other leaders (one of whom subsequently was allowed to return to India).

The militants remain opposed to a compromise. Recently they killed several former parliamentary representatives from the T.U.L.F. after that moderate group showed signs of considering a government proposal that would allot greater autonomy to provincial councils but would fall far short of establishing a Tamil state.

"If it's war, it must be war," President Jayewardene declared in a speech after the collapse of the Bhutan talks. But the "war" has already cost millions of dollars, which have been diverted from development. Even with a military budget eight times larger than that of 1977, the army leader has admitted that a victory on the battlefield is virtually impossible, and the Finance Minister is predicting huge deficits and potential economic ruin if the fighting continues. It is not clear that the guerrillas could sustain a prolonged war either.

The expulsion of some Tamil leaders from Madras inspired others to agree to the second cease-fire promoted by the Indians, on the condition that it be monitored by a multi-ethnic citizens' group. Despite the government's contention that the cease-fire is still in effect, fighting continues

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and the death toll mounts. Until now the conflict has been primarily a regional concern. Yet if it's war, then powers with interests in the area, such as the United States, may implicate themselves more directly in the conflict. □

THE CAMERON AFFAIR

A Defection in The Family

KAI BIRD AND MAX HOLLAND

Few people in Washington, other than the die-hards at the Heritage Foundation, would call the liberal-left community a powerful voice in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. A loose collection of church groups, veteran opponents of the coup that overthrew Salvador Allende in Chile, outgrowths of the antiwar movement, research institutes, the American Civil Liberties Union and the like, it displays few of the trappings of power. It has too few lobbyists working the halls of Congress and garners too little attention in the media. It annoys rather than influences policy-makers. Still, it has presented a united front on many major issues, such as the efficacy of cutting off foreign aid to punish human rights violators.

For the past five months the ranks of this small community have been shaken by the defection of Bruce Cameron, one of its rare effective advocates on the Hill. A former lobbyist for the Americans for Democratic Action, Cameron broke to support "humanitarian" aid to the Nicaraguan *contras* in June. The defection of one person may seem to be a minor matter, but it has touched off accusations of apostasy and counteraccusations of neo-Stalinism. Cameron now openly criticizes the "arrogance of the human rights community," calling one of the most respected groups on the left, the Washington Office on Latin America, "a shill for the Sandinistas." More important, Cameron's defection significantly reduces the liberal-left's ability to thwart Reagan's Central America policy in Congress. The crack in its unity has encouraged Congressional liberals to be seduced by the myth that they can make over Nicaragua, and Guatemala, in their image.

There is little agreement on the reasons for Cameron's heresy. The simplest explanation making the rounds is that he succumbed to the lure of power. Proponents of this view say that Cameron, known for his overbearing style, enjoys plotting and intrigue, and that the Reagan Administration led him to believe he could manipulate its Central America policy. Totally absorbed in the world of Congressional politics, he believes that the subtleties of legislative maneuvers in Washington will be fully comprehended in Managua and persuade the Sandinista government to change its ways.

The more charitable interpretation, given by Cameron's friends, is that he is driven by personal loyalty to a few prominent but politically isolated Nicaraguans who are not averse to Washington's acting as an arbiter of Nicaragua's internal affairs.

A fuller explanation would combine those interpretations and something more. The controversy dramatizes the dilemma of the liberal-left in opposing U.S. foreign policy. Should it accept the logic of imperialism, reducing the struggle over U.S. foreign policy to a quibble over how best to save the world from Marxism-Leninism? Or should it take a cool, tough and candid approach (to borrow the words of William Appleman Williams) to national security, one that forswears the overthrow of another government unless that government represents a clear threat to the United States?

Cameron's career once exemplified the liberal-left's use of human rights as a tool to make U.S. foreign policy noninterventionist. Beginning in 1976 he represented the A.D.A. in an umbrella group, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, the successor to a Vietnam-era organization formed to stop the funding of the war, and worked vigorously to attach human rights conditions to the multitude of foreign aid laws. In alliance with two Democratic Representatives, Donald Fraser of Minnesota and Tom Harkin of Iowa, the liberal-left won several legislative victories, despite the opposition of both the Ford and Carter administrations.

When the regime of Gen. Anastasio Somoza Debayle began to crumble in 1978, Cameron and the entire community fought the dictator's formidable Washington lobby for almost two years. After the Sandinistas' victory in July 1979, the liberal-left immediately advocated reconstruction aid. Cameron, still the A.D.A.'s lobbyist, wrote an influential memorandum circulated in Congress arguing that Nicaragua was a test case of the United States' ability to work with revolutionary regimes (a document he now considers "full of lies"). Cameron spent eight months lobbying for legislation that would give $75 million in aid to the new government.

But over the next five years, Cameron says, he became increasingly disenchanted with the Sandinistas. Managua seemed oblivious to liberal tutelage from Washington. Worse, from Cameron's point of view, the revolution seemed to be leaving behind the democrats who had joined the broad anti-Somoza front in the late 1970s. Cameron had become close to Alfonso Robelo Callejas, a young businessman whose opposition to Somoza had been motivated originally by his disapproval of the dictator's stranglehold over the economy, and Arturo Cruz, an economist who detested Somoza on more principled grounds but who had lived in Washington for more than a decade and had no political base in his own country. Despite his misgivings about the Sandinistas, Cameron maintained ranks for nearly five years, though he made no effort to hide his personal loyalties. He opposed aid to the *contras* and worked for the passage of the Boland amendment, which proscribed aid to groups seeking to overthrow the Sandinistas.

The first inkling that Cameron intended to promote what he would unimaginatively call a third force came last year. By then, the liberal-left had been forced to take a defensive posture in Congress, struggling against the Administration's

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initiatives aimed at destabilizing the Nicaraguan revolution. With a $27,000 grant to study human rights legislation from the Veatch Program, a liberal foundation in Plandome, New York, Cameron, no longer with the A.D.A., became a fellow at the Center for International Policy (C.I.P.), a research organization which monitors U.S. military and economic aid to the Third World. One of the tasks he set for himself, without C.I.P.'s knowledge, was to squire Edén Pastora Gómez around Washington, introducing him to members of Congress. In league with Robelo, Pastora, a disgruntled Sandinista whose revolutionary credentials were frequently exaggerated by the mainstream press, had built ARDE, a rudimentary political organization in Costa Rica. When C.I.P. officials read in the newspapers of Cameron's efforts on Pastora's behalf, they returned what remained of his grant money to the Veatch Program and asked that he leave the center.

After his parting of the ways with C.I.P., Cameron devoted himself to making criticism of revolutionary Nicaragua respectable. He had acquired some allies. In October 1984 *The New Republic* published an article by Robert Leiken that was highly critical of the Sandinistas. Both Leiken, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a veteran of the antiwar movement, and Cameron, who had rejoined the A.D.A., argued that a third force, which excluded discredited Somocistas and uncooperative Sandinistas, could be nurtured with careful guidance from liberals who really believed in human rights. Their identification with Robelo, Pastora, Cruz and his son Arturito became even closer. Gradually, Cameron and Leiken even began to consider using *contra* aid as leverage to force the Sandinistas to become more "democratic."

When Ann Lewis became national director of the A.D.A. in January, Cameron's future as a staff lobbyist was one of the first issues she faced. A.D.A. board members were concerned, according to Lewis, that Cameron "had been operating independently of A.D.A. policy" and that his ties to Cruz were so close that "if Cruz were to endorse aid to the *contras*, Bruce would also." Others in the liberal-left community began to suspect that despite Cameron's unquestioned value as a lobbyist—he was one of the few on their side who had direct access to members of Congress—he had become something of a mole, to the point where they objected to his presence at strategy meetings. Lewis decided to set up a special advisory board, composed of A.D.A. members and outside experts, to oversee Cameron's work.

Before the board could be constituted, Cameron began to participate in meetings of what he came to call the *contra* support group (C.S.G.), which was convened by Penn Kemble, a prominent conservative Democrat. The group discussed various proposals for *contra* aid that would be palatable to the House. One suggestion, from Bernie Aronson, a former speechwriter for Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale, was that Congress threaten to approve aid unless the Sandinistas modified their policies in certain specified ways. For the next three months this informal group—whose other members reject Cameron's description of them as a *contra* support group—would thrash out ideas about U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. Cameron acted as legislative point man, drawing on his Capitol Hill contacts and nine years' experience in negotiating compromises.

In April, an Administration-backed *contra* aid bill lost in the House by only two votes. At that point, Cameron was telling his liberal-left colleagues, "I can't imagine any Administration package I could sign off on." Privately, however, he, Kemble, Leiken, Aronson and others in the C.S.G. had mixed feelings. Although willing to support *contra* aid in principle, they believed that the Administration's approach, with all its blather about "freedom fighters," was ham-handed. They also felt that the White House had snubbed them. What the liberal-left saw as a tragic self-fulfilling prophecy, Cameron et al. regarded as a vehicle for enforcing their vision of a brighter political future for Nicaragua.

On May 9 the C.S.G. met with Democratic Representative Dave McCurdy of Oklahoma, after he had introduced an amendment to the *contra* aid bill that would provide for the money to be distributed through the Agency for International Development. Since McCurdy and the C.S.G. were obviously of like mind, the Congressman asked for the group's help in fashioning a *contra* aid package that would pass. The next day, Cameron met with Lewis and said he needed "time to think through" his position on Nicaragua. They agreed that he should take a leave of absence from the A.D.A.

In June, Cameron announced that "as an individual," he supported the $27 million "humanitarian" aid package. McCurdy, by and large, had adopted Cameron's complicated carrot-and-stick approach, which called on the *contras* to observe human rights and negotiate with the Sandinistas as conditions for receiving "humanitarian" aid. The final drama occurred when McCurdy lost control of his amendment to House Republican leader Robert Michel, who stripped it of the human rights conditions Cameron had painstakingly crafted. Feeling betrayed, Cameron desperately sought to bolster his claim that he only wanted to make Nicaragua more democratic. He appealed directly to McCurdy and suggested he ask President Reagan to write a letter certifying that the Administration did not seek to overthrow the Sandinistas, just reform them. Reagan wrote the letter, which proved instrumental in persuading McCurdy and thirty-two others to switch their votes, although the final language of the aid bill did not differ substantially from the one voted down in April. Nevertheless, the C.S.G. congratulated itself for finally getting the Administration to "compromise."

The day after the vote, Lewis told Cameron, who had come to the A.D.A. to ask for his job back, that he could not return. Cameron argued that Lewis was ignoring the nuances of his position and insisted that the final language in the amendment did not reflect his views. Moreover, he said, while he had supported Michel's final version, he hadn't lobbied for it—although some who worked against the bill say they saw Cameron buttonholing members of Congress. Cameron's nine-and-a-half-year relationship with the A.D.A. had come to an end. He went to work for

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McCurdy as a consultant, staying two months.

Cameron's defection continues to split the liberal-left in Washington many ways. Some still consider him a friend because of associations that go back to his antiwar days, but they no longer discuss Central America with him. Others have adopted a harsher attitude. Cameron has lost his position in two organizations in the community: the Foreign Policy Education Fund and the Human Rights Political Action Committee, which he helped found. As justification, members of the groups cite not only his efforts in behalf of *contra* aid but his new associations. In October the "Washington Talk" column of *The New York Times* carried an item reporting that Cameron gave a Nicaraguan cigar to Lieut. Col. Oliver North, the National Security Council aide who coordinates assistance to the *contras*, at a party attended by key Administration specialists on Latin America. Six weeks ago, Cameron, ignoring alternative sites, chose to sublet office space from the Institute on Religion and Democracy, a neoconservative think tank dedicated to exposing the unholy alliance between the liberal-left and the same churches Cameron worked with for nine years.

More significantly, Cameron's critics point out, he has become a renegade on Guatemala as well. When that country's Foreign Minister, Fernando Andrade Díaz-Duran, visited Washington in June, Cameron arranged for him to meet with several key members of Congress and their staffs. Andrade was described by Aryeh Neier, vice chair of Americas Watch, a human rights group, as "by far the most effective public relations advocate I have encountered for a government that has engaged in a consistent practice of grotesque abuses of human rights over a period of years." It was no surprise to see Cameron join, at Andrade's request, the official U.S. government delegation that recently monitored the November round of presidential elections in Guatemala.

Cameron exults in his new role as a martyr to the liberal-left, purged because he cares too deeply about human rights. He claims that he stands between extremes, refusing to be an apologist for left-wing totalitarianism (as are his former allies) or for right-wing authoritarianism (the blind spot, he says, of his neoconservative friends). As proof that he has not totally abandoned his former friends on the left he points to his recent support for a Senate amendment that curtails military aid to El Salvador until its government punishes the killers of two U.S. labor representatives and a Salvadoran land reform official. Otherwise, he says his mission is to persuade the neoconservatives that "not everything goes" in the struggle against communism, that they cannot be blind to the outrages perpetrated by U.S. allies. "There has to be a third force."

When asked if he worries about being used by the Administration, he replies, "I was used before when I kept saying things that weren't true about the Sandinistas." Compromising with the Administration is the least of his worries, however. The *contra* leadership in Florida—the "Key Biscayne Mafia"—has told Arturo Cruz that after they march into Managua, their first act will be to convene Nuremberg-style proceedings to try the *Sandinistas arrepentidos*, repen-

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K.A.L. 007: Unanswered Questions. This issue brings our 1984 report up to date. With contributions by David Pearson, John Keppel and David Corn, it is the culmination of an intensive investigation. The authors analyze Japanese radar data, discuss a Nation Institute-sponsored review, by aviation experts, of the final airline transmission and describe government efforts to obstruct investigation. (August 17/24, 1985)

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tant Sandinistas like Cruz. Cameron, Leiken, McCurdy and company have countered by fostering stories about Cruz's unhappiness over *contra* human rights violations and his lack of influence over the *contras'* military decisions. In a *New York Times* Op-Ed piece published last month, Leiken threatened that he and his cohorts would undo the Faustian bargain they brokered on *contra* aid unless Washington backs Cruz against the "cabal of former National Guard officers and Miami exiles who have the upper hand among the *contras*."

In a sense, this entire drama is the tragedy of American foreign policy writ small. Some members of the liberal-left community say the lesson is: Keep liberals away from revolution. Liberals are so busy protecting their flanks that they cannot understand that North Americans have no God-given responsibility for how others manage their internal affairs. We do not have to defend their mistakes or correct them.

Senator Frank Church—a quintessential liberal—showed that a persuasive argument can be made that keeps the liberal-left alliance intact when, inevitably, revolution occurs. Shortly before he died, Church wrote an article in *The Washington Post* titled "We Must Learn to Live With Revolutions," which summed up what he considered the most important lesson he had learned during twenty-four years in the Senate. "There is no reason," he concluded, "to transform a revolution in any of the countries of Central America, regardless from where it draws its initial external support, into a security crisis for us." □

Socialists

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

following the Socialist defeat in the parliamentary election ("The left has again missed its appointment with history") had been rehearsed for hours on videotape.

Yet the reputation is understandable. As soon as he switched, in 1974, from the more radical Unified Socialist Party to the bigger but more moderate Socialist Party, Rocard began a swing to the right, in policy if not always in political vocabulary. An *inspecteur des finances* (a high-level civil service rank) by profession and an economist by training, he grasped at once that the economic crisis was altering the premises on which the program of France's United Left was based. Instead of arguing that more radical means should be used to achieve the left's objectives, he concluded that its aims should be modified. Mitterrand the politician would not hear of it; that, after all, is not how you win elections. Rocard then made the mistake of challenging Mitterrand's leadership and of treating him as a man of the past. He was soundly defeated at the 1979 Socialist Party congress in Metz, and when Mitterrand was elected President, in 1981, Rocard and his followers had to eat humble pie. He was politically silenced until he resigned from the government, in April. Since then he has not only repeatedly said to his comrades, "I told you so"; he has urged them to square their ideology with their practice, to stop pretending they are the gravediggers of capitalism. This candid admission apparently plays with the general public—judging by Rocard's favorable ratings in opinion polls—and even in a Socialist Party bewildered and facing certain defeat. In votes taken as part of preparation for the Toulouse congress, the Rocard resolution drew 28.6 percent of party members' votes, considerably more than had been expected.

It is a custom in the Socialist Party when there are significant divisions over two or more motions to apportion seats in the executive committees in accordance with the votes cast for each motion beforehand, and then seek a composite resolution during the congress. Rocard was thus traveling to Toulouse to reach an inevitable compromise, but also to be the star of the show. He was outwitted by Lionel Jospin, Mitterrand's handpicked successor as party secretary in 1981. Jospin, shall we say, turned Rocard on his right. We don't want to be a small center-left party, he argued, but we have no objection to being a big social democratic one like the West German, British or Swedish parties. Yesterday's insult became a term of praise among leaders who suffer from acute amnesia. Rocard, his political clothes stolen, no longer knew how to act. Usually an effective speaker with a machine-gun delivery, he came across as muddled and boring. To make things worse, on the last day the limelight was seized by the youthful Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius, Rocard's main rival for the presidency.

Smooth and slick in looks as well as performance, Fabius might be described as a poor man's Valéry Giscard d'Estaing; not because he is a shoddier version—he is probably more gifted—but because he is supposed to be on the side of the downtrodden. Like the former President, he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. The son of an art merchant, he has an upper-middle-class Jewish background. Like Giscard, he was a champion at passing exams. He won honors in literature and politics at the highly competitive Ecole Normale Supérieure and the National Administration School, and graduated into an important post in the top civil service. In 1974, when he was 28, he discovered politics and the Socialist Party, becoming Mitterrand's personal assistant two years later. Caligula's horse? Not quite, though being chosen Mitterrand's lieutenant enabled him to climb rapidly up the ladder, achieving the premiership in July 1984. Ideology and principles are not his forte, and his socialism is limited to a few platitudes about justice and solidarity. But he is good on the tube, excellent at explaining things in a simplified vocabulary and an unsurpassed technocrat who can claim to be as "modern" as they come. Rocard, who used to challenge Mitterrand for the title of Man of the Future, is now 55; Fabius is 39.

Success at a Socialist congress, however, is not everything. Most people know that the Socialists have no chance of winning next year. The electoral law was even altered to prevent the right's victory from turning into a landslide. In 1981, under an electoral system based on majority rule, the Socialists, in coalition with the Communists, polled 49 per-

Daniel Singer is The Nation*'s correspondent in Europe.*

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cent of the vote and gained an absolute majority in the National Assembly. Next March the deputies will be elected through proportional representation. Even if the Socialists capture 30 percent of the vote, a share beyond their wildest dreams, they will not have a majority, and the weakened Communists are no longer their allies. The only serious question is, Will the respectable right be able to form a government on its own, or will it need the votes of Jean-Marie Le Pen's racist National Front? [See Singer, "The Resistible Rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen," *The Nation*, September 7.]

Yet in France's two-headed system the Socialists will not lose everything when they lose Parliament. Theoretically, Mitterrand will remain President until 1988. (I say theoretically because the French President, unlike his American counterpart, can resign and precipitate an early presidential election.) Rocard and Fabius on the left, Jacques Chirac, Giscard d'Estaing and Raymond Barre on the right, are already jockeying for position in these presidential stakes.

On October 27, two weeks after his success in Toulouse, Fabius faced his hardest test yet: a televised debate with Chirac. In hyperbole that put Madison Avenue to shame, the French media heralded this confrontation not just as the opening of the electoral campaign but as the match of the century. Although watched by an audience of 22 million, it was a flop. Not that the protagonists pulled their punches. "I have seen liars, but . . . " Fabius interjected at one point, while Chirac accused him of barking like a pug. The flaw in this much-touted fight was that it was phony and unprincipled. Chirac, allegedly a Gaullist, deplored France's unwillingness to participate in the Star Wars program (the general must have been turning in his grave). Fabius, allegedly a socialist, offered no plan for the economy, saying only that it should be flexible. In the past, when Pierre Mendès France faced Michel Debré, say, or François Mitterrand squared off against Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, one had the impression—or at least the illusion—that two attitudes, even two worlds, were facing each other. Having managed the capitalist crisis for four years, the Socialists have lost the right and even the capacity to speak in the name of a different society.

How far their language has degenerated can be measured every day. Jacques Delors, the Socialist Minister of Finance from 1981 to 1984 and now president of the Brussels commission of the European Communities, has just published (with a journalist co-author) a book contending that the French left has fortunately learned "that it must submit to the international law of change," that its great merit is to have taught the French people that "a firm must prosper, have profit margins" and so on. This same book tells us that "unemployment benefits in France, as in other European countries, are nothing but a powerful incentive not to work."

To say that the French Socialists have converted to social democracy debases the term. In its heyday, in Germany before World War I, social democracy was an integral part of the socialist movement, which was seeking to abolish capitalism and the exploitation of the workers. Only so-called reformers such as Eduard Bernstein assumed, wrongly in my view, that those aims could be achieved gradually, within existing institutions. Even today's bastard social democratic parties in West Germany, Britain and the Scandinavian countries cannot swallow the crap Delors puts out; they are too closely linked with the labor movement for that. What the French Socialists are really after at this stage of their downhill slide is a catchall organization along the lines of America's Democratic Party.

What are you whining about? the American reader may object. Consensus politics and the absence of a true alternative have been our lot for decades. But France once was different, and Italy too. In France, with its revolutionary tradition, its questioning of the prevailing ideology, millions of people believed in the possibility of changing life fundamentally through political action. It is this precious capital, this belief in an alternative way, that the Socialists have squandered.

With the electoral ides of March approaching, the Socialists are again seeking to rally the left-wing electorate. Beware, they warn. The conservatives are coming back, and with Le Pen breathing down their necks, they are more dangerous than ever. They will denationalize enterprises like the Renault car works, publicly owned since the end of the war. They will do their best to dismantle the welfare state, to roll back the victories of the labor movement in the factories and beyond. The alarm is in no way exaggerated, and the warning is earnest. The Socialists simply forget to add that if the right is aggressively on the move, it is because the left paved the way for it, politically as well as ideologically. As a genuine socialist put it to me: "In 1981 the victory was theirs; in 1986 the defeat will be ours." His gloomy message does not apply only to France. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Discreet Art Of the Bourgeoisie

J. HOBERMAN

THE REVENGE OF THE PHILISTINES: Art and Culture, 1972–1984. *By Hilton Kramer. Free Press. 445 pp. $25.*

It's symptomatic of Hilton Kramer's splenetic yet uneasy sense of entitlement that he regularly casts himself as a beleaguered outsider, the implacable foe of some imagined power structure. Once the chief art critic of *The New York Times*—the newspaper's "tireless meter maid of the arts," as Harold Rosenberg unkindly put it—since 1982 Kramer has issued tickets by other means as editor of *The New Criterion*.

Reading Kramer's collected essays, one soon discovers that the boldness of contravening the avant-garde establishment is among the author's favorite themes, even though, by his lights, the avant-garde no longer exists. But that is only one of Kramer's tricks. Apt to include his readers in his sweeping assertions or to refer to himself in the third person, Kramer delights in concocting absurd examples of conventional wisdom to debunk or defy:

> It is one of the oddities of modern cultural life that the artists who give us some prompt and unalloyed pleasure are not usually the artists who loom largest on our artistic horizon.

The johnlike insistence on "prompt and unalloyed pleasure" notwithstanding, what in the world is Kramer talking about? Is he bemoaning the marginality of the French Impressionists, whom he sees as the "fulcrum" of twentieth-century art, or the neglect of Henri Matisse, his candidate for the century's greatest painter? Elsewhere you get the feeling that Picasso disqualified himself for that designation by painting a flock of "ingratiating peace doves" and, once, even a "benign portrait of Stalin." Although Kramer adores fulminating against the politicization of culture, no critic is less forgiving of what he sees as an ideological lapse.

J. Hoberman reviews films and books for The Village Voice.

But if the commissar in Kramer occasionally overwhelms the connoisseur, let no one doubt his passion for art. A love of painting is as evident in his hostility to intellectual artists like Marcel Duchamp or Robert Smithson as it is in his appreciation of Pierre Bonnard and Richard Diebenkorn. Too often, though, he's so busy railing about the conspiracy that has kept a Bonnard or a Diebenkorn from receiving his due that he's left with scarcely anything to say about the paintings. Perhaps painting isn't enough after all; Kramer prides himself on his opposition to formalism.

When Kramer commends Neo-Expressionism for paying "attention to the world" and condemns political art for abandoning "artistic criteria," one encounters another slip in logic. Sometimes such contradictions appear in the same essay. Kramer opens a love letter to Maurice Sendak with a contemptuous reference to "the Niagara of critical commentary, which nowadays pours forth from every quarter, shedding its mighty waters on everything from trashy movies to nitwit television shows to moldering old photo albums." Two pages later, he speaks of being "delighted" by Sendak's use of Laurel and Hardy, comic books, Busby Berkeley musicals and Art Deco as sources.

Glib generalization, superficial analysis and self-contradiction are, of course, the occupational hazards of newspaper criticism. In Kramer's hands the last of these has become a form of inadvertent self-disclosure. In 1981 he proclaimed that "the large and devoted following" of modern painting ("long famous for its tendency to alienate the public and offend respectable taste") accounts for "the kind of vitality that we see in the visual arts at the present moment." Is it, Kramer wondered, "that our understanding of art has improved, or that the art itself has changed, or that the public has itself changed in ways that make the experience of high art seem more than ever necessary to its spiritual survival and well being?" Writing on the reopening of the Museum of Modern Art in 1984, he provided a gloomy reassessment of the mass audience. "In contrast to the old middlebrows," the new public for whom the expanded museum was apparently designed is "anything but confident of its taste," he stated.

> In a sense that I do not mean to be invidious but merely descriptive, this public may even be said to have no taste—none, anyway, where art is concerned—but to be possessed instead of a keen appetite for whatever modes of cultural experience are persuasively and conspicuously commended to its attention.

What happened in the intervening three years? Did Kramer's understanding of the public improve, or did the public itself change? Was it the election of Ronald Reagan? Or was it that while the first essay was written to flatter the readers of *The New York Times*, the second was designed to please the presumably more elite readers of *The New Criterion*?

Although Kramer's appreciations can be those of the reflexive apparatchik, he has staked out a position worth examining. As the title of his collection suggests, Kramer's self-appointed role is as defender of the faith against the infidel hordes of postmodernism, which he defines as "a betrayal of the high purposes and moral grandeur [of] modernism in its heyday." This stance is not inherently conservative—Jürgen Habermas has written on modernism's "incomplete project"—but Kramer's view of modernism has a particularly neoconservative twist. Whereas Habermas sees modernism as intrinsically critical and utopian, Kramer sees it as only superficially so. For Kramer, modernism began in a spirit of criticism and revolt against official culture but, in due time, accommodated itself to the bourgeoisie, and vice versa: "Like partners in a stormy but enduring marriage, the avant-garde and the bourgeoisie came more and more to depend on each other and even to resemble each other." (Throughout the Kramer *oeuvre*, "modernism" and "avant-garde" are used interchangeably, although clearly he means the former to be a domesticated version of the latter.) In Kramer's cozy scenario, the avant-garde is bourgeois society's "licensed opposition":

> Much—if not quite everything—that we continue to esteem in the creative achievements of the last two centuries

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> owes its existence to this curious compact between the bourgeoisie and its licensed opposition.

(That "not quite everything" hangs tantalizingly in the air—what could Kramer be thinking of, *The Battleship Potemkin*?)

So far so good. At some point, however—Kramer is not clear on exactly when it happened—the balance of power shifted. The loyal opposition came "to exert a powerful control over the very culture it still ostensibly 'opposed.'" While the nation slept, the fluoride got into the water. The avant-garde tail learned to wag the bourgeois dog. In other words, Andy Warhol (John Case? Laurie Anderson? Irving Howe?) took over the world, and Hilton Kramer became the vanguard.

Upon this bizarre turnabout pivots Kramer's notion of postmodernism. Originally, that is in 1975, Kramer had enthusiastically announced that postmodernism promised a continued "détente and accommodation" between the avant-garde and the bourgeoisie. Confident that the bourgeois half of the marriage was growing stronger, Kramer revealed his agenda:

> As contemporary taste grows more expansive and eclectic, historical research is less inhibited in acknowledging the quality and accomplishment of artists who do not conform to simple-minded scenarios of revolt. Artists who once served, and served brilliantly, the interests of established power are granted a new aesthetic visibility.

Could there be, Kramer wondered, a modernism devoted to serving "brilliantly" the interests of established power? For that to happen, the authority of such old proto-Bolshie wheezes as Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg would first have to be discredited. Next, the bourgeoisie would have to be shepherded back from the precipice of ultramodernism. Tom Wolfe had cleared the way in 1975 with *The Painted Word*. Albeit tentatively praising Wolfe's lampoon (for which he gave himself much of the credit), Kramer concluded that Wolfe had gone too far: his campaign of ridicule might end up discrediting the mainstream of modernist achievement.

In Kramer's view, this is exactly what happened. No sooner had his readers learned to appreciate Matisse, Giacometti and Fairfield Porter than the decomposing corpses of Beaux-Arts architecture, German Romantic paint-

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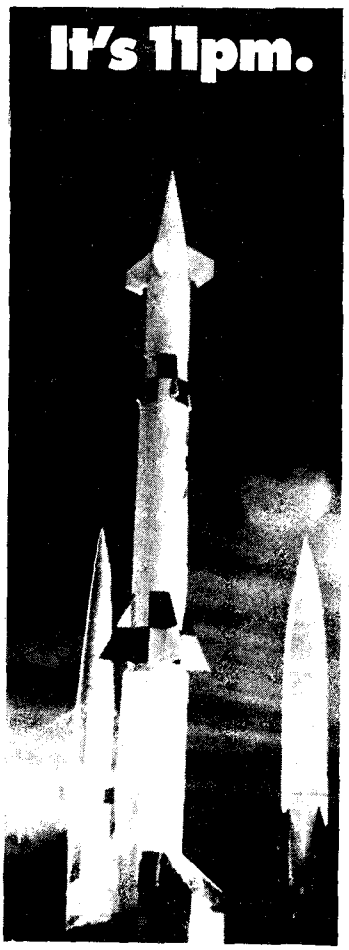

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INTO THE TERRITORIES

Here it is again in St. Paul, Minnesota,
the international conspiracy of kindness.
I've never seen so many businessmen
stare with such humble interest at a passing girl.
The Mississippi River, conqueror at spelling bees,
smoothes like the forehead of a peaceful man,
shines broad and sleepy at the end of day.
And down the flowered streets
saunter all the other spring somnambulists
in lightweight clothing, grazing
against car bumpers, climbing catwalks
of elegance high above downtown Minneapolis,
land of cloud-tinted water.

By dark I'm at a funny farm
for businessmen; white paint, a t.v. lounge
and open phones along the corridors.
I've come here to be institutionalized
with fifty other youthful leaders of America,
paid by a foundation that stands by corn.
We sit in tiny metal chairs attached to desks
and raise our hands to suggest leadership qualities.
I am the only leader in America
who still smokes cigarettes. The others gently
wave my fiery breath away. Our lecturer drones on,
stutters on every m, so that I learn to dread it coming up,
the way he sticks and then goes under, like a drowning man.
But soon we all drift off, caught
in our strangeness, every one of us.
Fifty new souls rise slowly up and bow
to one another, and go their own way,
leaving the nodding heads behind.

The young doctor holds me around the waist
as we dance beneath a moon I failed to notice;
breathing at his shirt, making an effort not to sweat.
He hands me photos of his wife and three small sons
and when I show my family in return—
one dead ex-husband and a fiancé—
he gravely palms my skull of hair,
wishes me luck. Why are we dancing together
like this, why am I rigidly standing
in some physician's sweet-smelling arms?
Since both of us are leaders, neither one
follows well; the dance stumbles along.
Is something in the air in Minnesota?
The sky's so high and wide
it drives the horses wild
across the grass trying
to find the end of it.

But my whole being yearns toward the dying East.
The man who runs the candy store
gives me a chocolate pretzel, puts his arm
across my shoulders, and says he'd
ride with me to Syracuse if he wasn't
just back from New York himself. Five days
of unremitting kindness have left me trembly,
without resources, like a child.
Walking beside the tracks
I pat myself gently, checking
for missing parts—train tickets, wallet,
breastbone and ribs. Yes, here they are
again; my naming of things complete,
the week's work done,
my loneliness intact.

Liz Rosenberg

ing, the Hudson River school, Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Grant Wood rose from the grave to parade through cultural institutions like ghouls from *Night of the Living Dead*. For Kramer, the resurgence of traditional bourgeois taste can't be the fault of the bourgeoisie. Who, then, is responsible for this "reactionary" development? Rounding up his usual suspect, Kramer blames the permissive 1960s. Under the banner of camp, the 1960s avant-garde made trash seem fun, thus severing "the link between high culture and high seriousness that had been a fundamental tenet of the modernist ethos" and paving the way for postmodernism. Here, Kramer's sense of art history is rooted in high school. For him, camp has less to do with a wholesale revaluation of popular culture than with the maintenance of an esthetic in-group. Now that the secrets of modernism are available to the bourgeoisie, camp, according to Kramer, occupies the traditional elitist position. In short, the citadel of modernism was subverted from within, by its own success, snobbery and long-suppressed envy (first discovered by Kramer) for the bourgeois culture it ostensibly destroyed.

In fact, the often bewildering plurality of postmodern styles does signal the end of modernism's esthetic authority—as do the blurring of distinctions between high art and the mass media, the commodification of culture and the triumph of marketing. The same neocons who complain about the leveling of cultural standards, known in Europe as "creeping Americanism," inevitably double as "realistic" advocates of the marketplace rule, not to mention American hegemony, that makes such leveling possible. It's telling that Kramer glosses over the corporate sponsorship of art shows as a determining factor in what museums exhibit.

The beleaguered Kramer has no shortage of enemies on his list: renegade modernists, Stalinoid critics, bitter homosexuals, trendy curators, unscrupulous dealers, pointy-headed bureaucrats, foreign theorists, political artists, Susan Sontag, idiotic art historians, the sheeplike audiences who crowd the Museum of Modern Art. Are these the dread Philistines? It's a question to ponder while studying the grim photograph emblazoned on the dust jacket. Scowling with near satanic petulance, the author dares the reader to take him lightly. As his notes on camp warn:

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The implications of this phenomenon are by no means simply comical. . . . Much is at stake in the outcome. And what is primarily at stake is the concept of seriousness.

Philistine shmilistine. Given Kramer's air of sour menace—what I take to be his image of moral grandeur—one has to conclude that he believes vengeance is his. □

Cultcrazy

THOMAS M. DISCH

MASTERS OF ATLANTIS. *By Charles Portis. Alfred A. Knopf. 248 pp. $15.95.*

People of very limited intellectual means—"the dumb" so-called (a class that may include not only the dim-witted but the inveterately short-circuited)—have the same need as bright people to exercise their wits with the time-passing conundrums of scholarship, art and religion. The bright may scoff at the brain-teasers designed for the dumb, but more often the dumb's ideas are politely ignored, until such time as the aggrieved dumb begin to burn the books bright people read, or to demand equal time for Creationism, whereupon some savants of the intellectual establishment are delegated to engage in a few ritual debates with the spokesmen of the dumb. These recurrent monkey trials have produced the climate of envy and contempt that has obtained between the two classes since at least Mencken's time; since, that is, the numbers of the literate dumb reached critical mass, generating a popular culture catering to their needs. Before that time it was possible to take a friendlier and essentially pastoral view of them, lumping the dumb together with those disadvantaged in other ways—the poor, the ugly, the provincial—but once the dumb began to insist that their ideas be taken seriously and that egghead scientists devote some attention to the evidence for reincarnation, Atlantis or the theories of Velikovsky, once their books began to preponderate on best-seller lists, a kindly attitude became harder to maintain and the dumb came to be viewed as the cultural auxiliary of the lunatic right in politics. Their clergy, gurus and millennial prophets were pictured as con men wolfishly preying on credulous sheep (e.g., Sinclair Lewis's Elmer Gantry or the real-life L. Ron Hubbard). The old Erasmian view that folly is nearly universal and a source of comedy has almost been lost from sight.

But not by Charles Portis, the author of *True Grit*. His new novel, *Masters of Atlantis*, is a hilarious and good-natured account of intellectual and spiritual aspiration at their buffoonish nadir. The story begins in Chaumont in 1917, when for a mere $200 a gypsy sells to a Candide-like American doughboy, Lamar Jimmerson, the manuscript, handwritten in Greek, of the *Codex Pappus* :

> Not, of course, the original script. The original book had been sealed in an ivory casket in Atlantis many thousands of years ago, and committed to the waves on that terrible day when the rumbling began. After floating about for nine hundred years the casket had finally fetched up on a beach in Egypt, where it was found by Hermes Trismegistus. Another nine years passed before Hermes, with his great powers, was able to read the book, and then another nine before he was able to fully understand it, and thus become the first modern Master of the Gnomon Society.

On Malta, where he goes to search, in vain, for the Gnomon Temple and the Master of Gnomonry, Pletho Pappus, Jimmerson finds his first convert, Sidney Hen, a young Englishman in the mold of Aleister Crowley, and a bride, Hen's crippled sister Fanny. Returning to the States, Jimmerson has fifty copies of an English translation of the *Codex* printed, but

> some years were to pass before the first printing was exhausted. The 1920s were later to be celebrated as a joyous decade but to Lamar it was a time of the grossest materialism and of hollow and nasty skepticism. No one had time to listen.

In the 1930s, however, Gnomonry comes into its own, and "on April 10, 1936 . . . the Gnomon Temple was dedicated in Burnette, Indiana, the most fashionable suburb of Gary."

All this by page twenty-one. The rest

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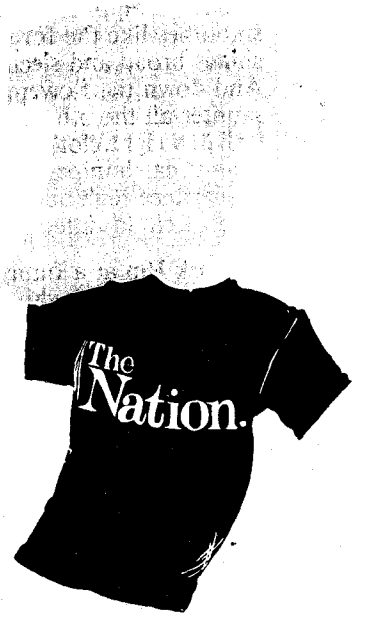

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of the novel chronicles the fortunes of Jimmerson, Hen and assorted other Gnomon hierarchs as, with undiminished self-importance and a faith majestically blind, the temple decays and membership declines. There is not a chapter of the twenty-four without its bounty of good jokes, all framed on the ageless opposition between quixotic self-deception and public perception. Portis, like Dickens, takes an unashamed delight in grotesquery and freakishness and in the intractableness of stupidity, as though it were a prodigious weed to be marveled at. Indeed, the closest literary cousin to *Masters of Atlantis* I can think of is *The Pickwick Papers*, with which it shares not only a climactic courtroom scene but also a reconciling holiday feast.

Portis's unusual charity toward his crew of numbskull mystagogues is probably a function, simply, of his own even-tempered character, but those like me who look to novels instead of to meteors for portents of the *Zeitgeist* may choose to see in *Masters of Atlantis* the forerunner of a trend toward a greater tolerance between the Two Cultures, not science and the humanities, but the dumb and the bright. For thirty years at least the gap between a high culture democratically available to all classes and a popular culture designed for the lowest common denominator has grown wider and at the same time less visible (or, at least, less mentionable). The distance will soon be large enough that the mandarin class can afford to take a charitable view of the people they don't have to talk to. Stupid people may be allowed to go their own way without reproach, simple shepherds once again. □

Pyrography

EDMUND WHITE

WORLD'S FAIR. *By E.L. Doctorow. Random House. 288 pp. $17.95.*

The very modesty of E.L. Doctorow's new novel is its most daring aspect, but it's a dare that pays off. In so many autobiographical novels the writer is tempted to gift himself with nearly perfect recall and to turn his early experiences into signs of his own later genius. Doctorow avoids these temptations and sticks close to memory, its gaps and haziness as well as its pockets of poetic lucidity. He never divines in his Jewish middle-class Bronx childhood of the 1930s the extraordinary eloquence and wisdom he was later to win for himself.

Doctorow trusts his material. He also trusts his recollections, no matter how incomplete they may be in some places. This is not a book about the deceptions of memory. In some slight instances the narrator's brother or mother, who are both given their turn to speak, may correct the facts as presented earlier, but the corrections are only a question of five dollars more or a year older. This is a novel in which the brick buildings and the summer light are as intense, as substantial and as present as in a Hopper painting.

The sentences are short, the presentation straightforward, the chronology strict. The narrator seldom indulges in psychological speculation about his past self or his parents' motives. The epic ordinariness of people's lives is the meat of this novel. That this ordinariness should apply to the story of a Jewish kid who is often ill, who fears the local hoodlums, who overhears his parents' late-night quarrels only proves how heterogeneous American life is. There is no norm; the rule is nothing but the exception. At the end of the novel the teen-age hero places in a contest by writing an essay on the typical American boy. The one-paragraph essay concludes that the typical American boy is kind and "cooperates with his parents. He knows the value of a dollar. He looks death in the face." This disarming, oddly satisfying sequence sets the tone for the book.

Along the way the author examines the phenomenology of everyday life. Any book in which a young person is being inducted into the mysteries of adult life permits us to take a slow, puzzled look at conventions usually too close to be seen. With a sure touch Doctorow renders the conventions as well as the landscape against which they occur. We catch glimpses of a Woman With a Past (a childhood sweetheart's affable, pretty mother). We overhear echoes of rancor from the in-laws who think their

Edmund White has just published a new novel, Caracole *(E.P. Dutton).*

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daughter-in-law is a Spendthrift and in any event Not Good Enough (the maligned woman is the boy's mother). From the boy's point of view we learn that his happy-go-lucky father, always so jaunty and elegantly turned out, is gambling away his music store business. And we share the narrator's dismay when he discovers that his beloved older brother is flunking out of college. At the same time the decline of the family's fortunes is marked by their successively smaller, cheaper apartments.

But the problems are not overplayed. Juxtaposed against the family gloom are bright set pieces that record the weight and wonder of the visual world: the coal truck ("the great smoking avalanche of black stone"); the wake of the passing water wagon ("In the raging course of water flowing swiftly along the curb I tossed a Good Humor ice cream stick"); the kids' success in building an igloo (noting its "structured withdrawal" into the "invited darkness"); the fish store and drug store (the latter with its "large glass jars of red and blue liquid").

The characters themselves are as clear as if they had been etched out of wood with fire—that old-fashioned summer-camp technique of pyrography. Particularly memorable is the Yiddish-speaking grandma who has attacks of madness during which she thinks her daughter is poisoning her and prays that an army of Cossacks will mow her evil children down. The older brother is a mild, sensible guy, competent in the small things of life; a less observant writer would have missed him altogether. Doctorow's gift is to make his outlines firm and dark, burned into the wood to stay.

When, as a boy, the narrator first studies Christian art, his untutored response reveals how weirdly sadistic those paintings can seem. With the objectivity of youth he sees the representations of Christ on the Cross as pictures of "scraggly bearded men almost naked and looking very pale with their eyes rolled up in their heads and their arms stretched out on wooden posts and with nails in their hands and feet." On every page the narrator is constructing the anthropology of twentieth-century America.

Doctorow has rooted his vision in a particular moment, place and social milieu. His attention to detail, however, never becomes just an excursion down memory lane. Mere lists of names, products and now-vanished sights can have the unwanted effect of making the past seem somehow amusing, quaint, absurd (absurd for not being up-to-date), and that approach leaves the past spayed and clawless. Doctorow finds feelings that are deep in the settings of a more innocent past. His past purrs and hisses and is capable of scratching deep enough to draw blood. □

FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Dance With a Stranger

Britain after the war was lovely and squalid, a paper poppy from the past in the dead land of defeat. The engine of empire which had driven culture and society for two centuries was finally, irreparably wrecked. No new ideal, no brighter hope had appeared to take its place, not even the modest vision of opportunity and prosperity. In the age of austerity there was plenty of nothing. Out of relief and fatigue a certain seedy excitement rose to occupy the British mind. There were parties in the pubs, Shakespeare in the suburbs and the first glimmerings of the style and sophistication that later became the substance of swinging England. The great contradiction, however, was that peace seemed to have no purpose against the gravity of imperial history, class rigidity and Anglo-Saxon attitudes. Love among the ruins of war was restricted and repressed, and hence both obsessive and casual. Politics were similarly afflicted, and expressed in anger rather than commitment.

That was then, and this is *noir*. Mike Newell's *Dance With a Stranger*, with a screenplay by Shelagh Delaney, takes a dark view of those days, as the "angries"—Osborne, Braine, Wesker, et al.—did at the time, as certain writers now, such as David Hare, are doing again as they look back on the period. Newell treats the squalid love and life of Ruth Ellis (Miranda Richardson) as a moral metaphor for an immoral time: not in the petty personal sense of good behavior, but in the larger social sense of human purpose. This is, after all, a true story, and Ruth was not a good girl. When she was bad she was terrible, a cheap tart (in the old vernacular), a boozy barfly, a husbandless negligent mother, an occasional hooker and a persistent tease. Constrained by class

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and culture and confined in the restricted universe of her seedy pub and the flat upstairs—with only an occasional side trip to the cold and rocky seashore—she had little hope of moving out and up in the world. Britain then was not an equal-opportunity society. Mobility was limited to a small category of artists and professionals who could assimilate the attitudes of the establishment or amuse the upper classes, and to an even smaller group of sexual entrepreneurs who were lucky enough to marry well.

Ruth Ellis would never be an artist. Her rendition of the title song easily wins the award for the most pathetic performance of a torch tune in a movie since Claire Trevor sang "Moanin' Low" in *Key Largo*. But sex was her stock in trade, and she must have learned early on how to use that one resource to advantage. Before she enters the film's frame, Ruth has one man in tow, an extremely doting and utterly average bloke named Desmond (Ian Holm), whose attention is assured so long as his love is unconsummated. But then along comes David (Rupert Everett), a dashing layabout with a country seat, a racing car and an intolerance for alcohol. In a trice, Ruth has David in her flat and on the floor, as much to taunt Des as to satisfy her soul, but it is out of just such fatuous flirtations that fools for love are made.

For the rest of the movie, Ruth and David come at each other, so to speak, like hounds in heat, screwing and bruising with passionate abandon. But their approach is not unencumbered. They carry with them the luggage of class and the burden of their historic alienation. Each is caught in a web of expectations for family, career and success. There is no hope of extrication, for the values are vain and the bags are too heavy.

I mean *noir*, with a vengeance! Seldom has a slice of life been so bleak. Newell does it all in classic design. Ruth's red lips glow with the blush of doom against her white skin and whiter hair. The fog is so thick that bobbies have to guide cars around town with kerosene torches. The pub, the flat, the rocky beach, the country house and the race track seem to sink in a sepia chiaroscuro, like pictures from an old scrapbook. Even the burning colors have the feel of black-and-white, which is to say that they are positioned for emotional contrast rather than decorative illumination. Camera angles are consistently of the genre: Hitchcockian overheads, semi-close-ups with big bits of someone else's hair in the foreground, and always shots of people behind lace curtains, split by posts, framed in windows.

Style is what holds the picture together, and what ultimately makes it so deeply disturbing. Richardson never compromises with the banality of Ruth's life or the fatuity of her love, never tries to inject a false note of meaning or pretend that underneath that cheap exterior is a soul of sterling. Everett (who brilliantly played the "Guy Burgess" spy-as-a-young-man character in *Another Country*) is callow and crazed with love, but always suggests that he is just a bit more manipulative than his lover, that the man is always more in control of destiny than the woman, that an upper class (however down at the heels) always has more room to maneuver than a lower one and that all victims are not equally victimized. It is he, at last, who drives her mad; but it is she who destroys him, in a blaze of anger and revenge. It's a merciless moral, but as they said in those days, there you are. □

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SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2079

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A		A		S		I		R		I		I		E
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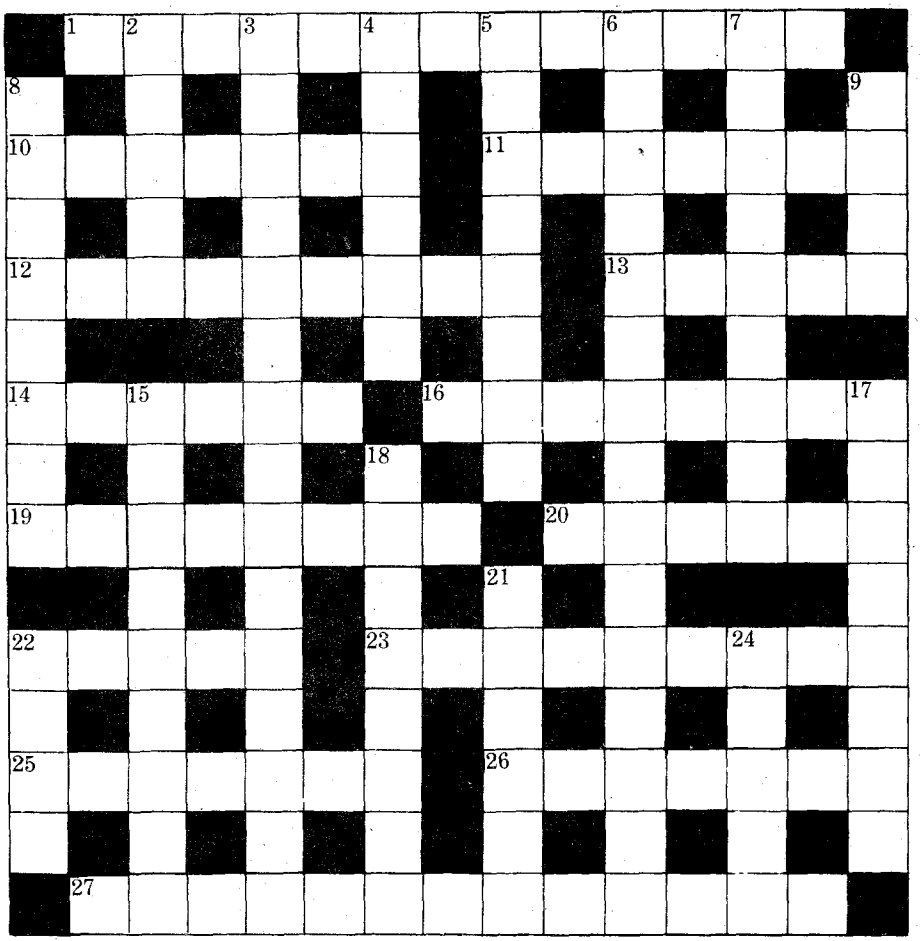
Crossword Puzzle No. 2080

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Chief obstacle to the vision of April? (4,2,3,4)
10 This sum isn't correct, but it might have a connection with more than one country. (7)
11 Can't, as a sort of it, make up the game. (7)
12 Those who used to travel in them obviously had to have pull. (9)
13 To a point, one step modern explorers are concerned with. (5)
14 Such a policy shouldn't lead to an immediate engagement. (6)
16 With it, Gawain is in real trouble, just marking time. (8)
19 Settle in securely, being part of men's concern. (8)
20 Silver spike? It might be at the tip of your fingers, almost! (6)
22 This sort of log is found in Connaught. (5)
23 Seed scattered on the packing box, to divert for a profane purpose. (9)
25 Is found in the kingdom of Truth, according to some painters. (7)
26 In the Scottish mountain, the way to make something wider? (7)
27 One of the two places where the air promises a unique morning fineness. (Either one might seem fitting.) (5,8)

DOWN

2 When tipsy, I can't make such a ludicrous gesture. (5)
3 Being this sort of collector might be most amusing toil, but we usually have a slightly different word for it! (15)
4 Saunas might be rather unusual—and unnecessary—at this place. (6)
5 Commonplace writer's truisms? (They might be cutting.) (8)
6 Many will be this in June, but only a few young girls go on to one. (9,6)
7 Strange that one might find Corsica at a place in Central America! (5,4)
8 A tune to pilfer? It could make quite a hit! (3,5)
9 Not colorful as a place beyond which things might be considered "out." (4)
15 Is not a bad sort of word for the sole punishment! (9)
17 What's the point in quantities of old ships? (8)
18 It may be only theoretical, but it's somewhat like a school. (8)
21 In this way, I keep out a connecting line, of sorts. (6)
22 When one puts this on, one doesn't necessarily put on improper airs. (4)
24 Forest which doesn't show the beginning of a growing place. (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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Stephen F. Cohen on THE SOVIET UNION.

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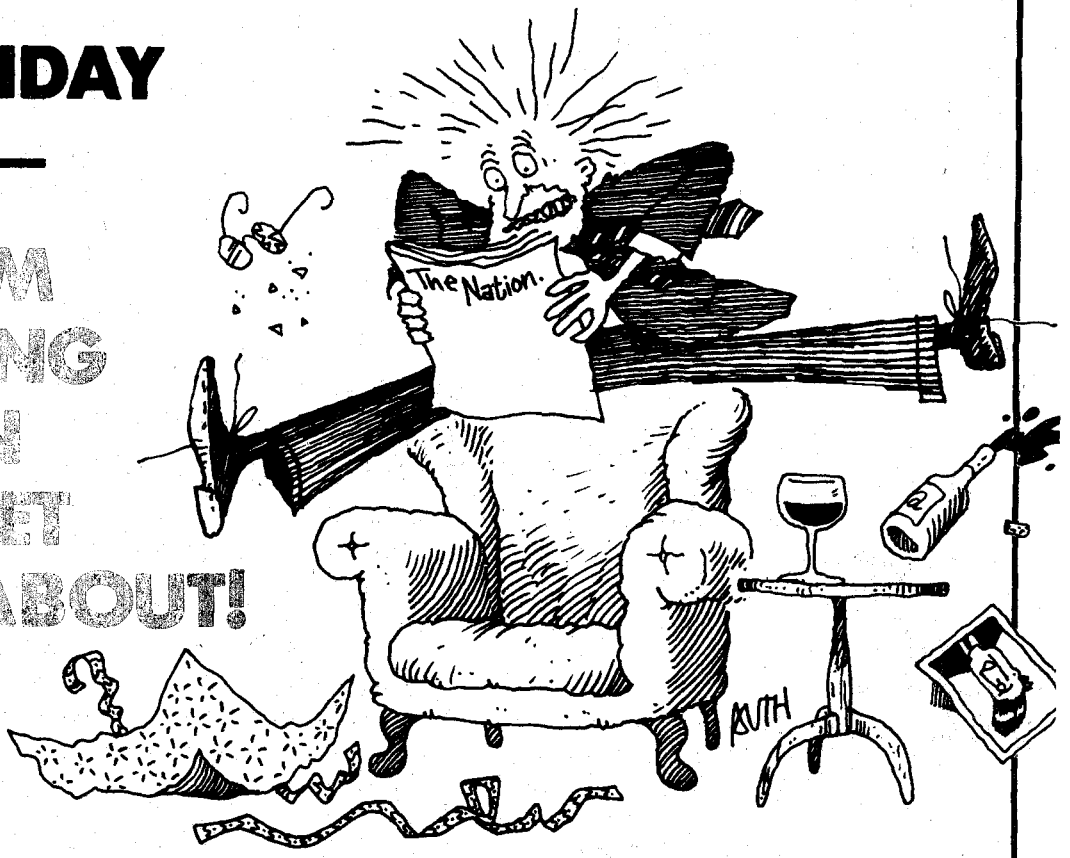

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